Week ending November 10 1951 *Wednesday Fourpence*

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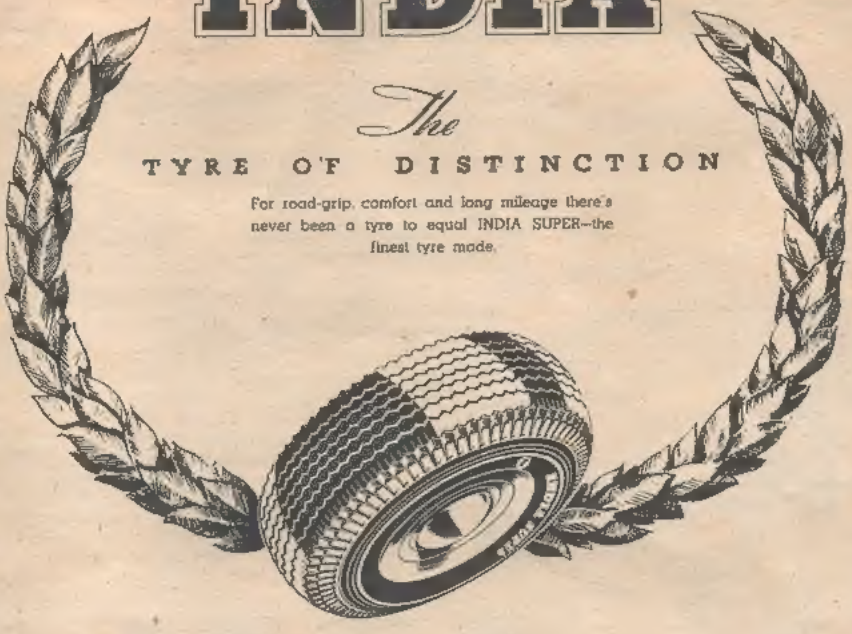

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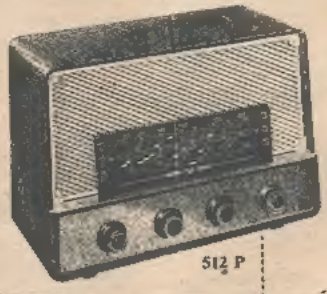
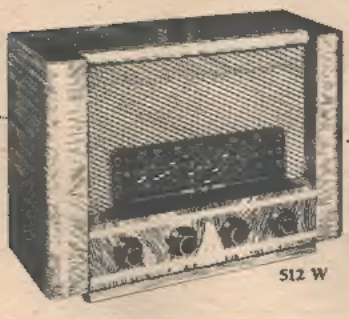


512 P



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EDITORIAL

Britain needs more houses—with fewer "frills"

THE AFTERMATH OF AN election is a good time to examine soberly some of the problems which have been the subject of hectic political campaigning.

What, for instance, is the truth about the housing shortage? Have we done everything possible to meet the tremendous demand for new homes? What more can be done? Suppose we try to look at the facts without Party prejudice.

More than 1,100,000 permanent and temporary houses have been built since the war, and altogether more than 1,400,000 homes have come into existence. But we still have far from enough to go round, and progress in making up the deficiency seems heartbreakingly slow to those on waiting lists. The difference between being satisfied with housing development and being disgruntled often lies in whether one has a home of one's own or not. It's as simple as that.

BUT the problem is not at all simple. *If* the population had not increased; *if* six war years of no building had not left such large arrears, it is quite likely that what has already been done might have proved enough to meet the immediate demand.

And *if* labour and materials had been plentiful, a good deal more might have been done already.

But all these difficulties have had to be met on top of the repair or replacement of 3,745,000 homes damaged or destroyed in the war.

The result is that British housing still awaits the spurt which alone can enable it to overtake the people's needs.

Whatever the politicians may say, this is not necessarily the fault of anyone in particular. It is absurd to compare the number of houses built since the war with the number before the war, in very different conditions; it is equally pointless to compare the late 1940s with the early 1920s.

There is little doubt that the rate of building has been as high as could be expected in a war-exhausted country trying to balance its trade in a menacing world. No political attitudes could greatly have altered the harsh facts which, in the end, must decide just how many new homes can be provided for how many people in a given time.

When the war ended, the first harsh fact was shortage of labour. When that was overcome a second harsh fact appeared—builders were short of certain materials, and especially of timber, which costs dollars. Now, timber is rather more plentiful, because it is coming again from Scandinavia and Russia as well as from North America.

The third and current harsh fact is the adverse effect of rearmament on housing. This has seriously interfered with both labour and materials, and has sent costs soaring.

Unfortunately, it will go on doing so. Inflation is on the march in the building industry as everywhere else. It is setting up new economic obstacles in the way of housing programmes.

Some local councils have refused all or part of their allocation of new houses because they could not face the financial burden. And some would-be tenants who have waited long for new homes have refused them when they were at last ready because the rents were too high.

Everything has "gone up." Compared with 1938 the cost of a new house has trebled. Rents have not trebled—but the difference in capital outlay either weighs hard on rates and taxes or is being piled up as public debt.

In this situation there may be more strength than formerly in the argument that private builders should be allowed a freer hand—subject to rent controls. If they can put up houses and rent them reasonably, it will save public loans and grants.

The important thing is to get as many more new homes as possible built as quickly as possible *with the labour and materials available*. And to keep costs down so as to provide these homes at rents which people can afford to pay.

HOWEVER reluctantly, housing standards must be reviewed and, if necessary, scaled down to these requirements. Already this year, local authorities have been told that they may build three-bedroom houses of less than 900 square feet with one lavatory instead of two. That means a reduction in size of more than one-tenth.

Where real savings can be achieved by such means, the limit must be lowered again. And cheaper methods of construction must be used.

Smaller and cheaper houses need not be bad houses, if they have first-rate design and modern equipment. We cannot go back to jerry-building. But we must realize that people in desperate need of new homes will not quarrel about a hundred square feet of floor space more or less. We must economize on everything except numbers. The real priority is to put up the number of new homes without putting up the cost.

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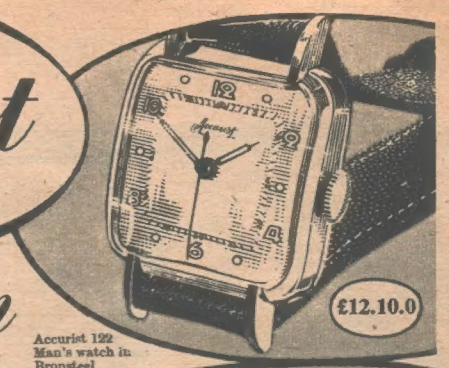
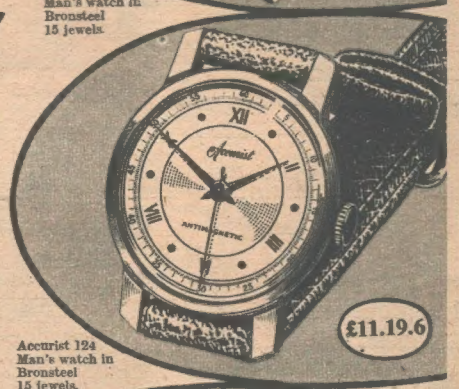


Accurist 122 Man's watch in Bronsteel 15 jewels.

Accurist watches have proved by time their beauty, reliability and precision. All have 15-jewelled Swiss precision movements; their accuracy can be relied upon completely; and their good looks you can judge from those shown here.



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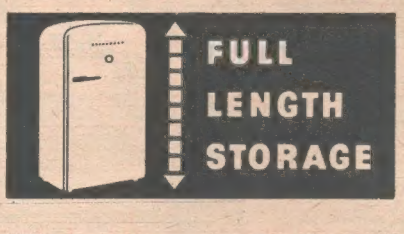
THE NEW L71
PRESTCOLD
REFRIGERATOR

Prestcold have made many fine refrigerators—but here is the star of them all. Prestcold perfection of design and finish and construction are world-famous—but here is a refrigerator which shines with a new and brighter beauty. Greater in space, greater in grace, with full length storage, new features, new hold-everything design, new beauty, here is the refrigerator star which dims all others.

★ 7 cu. ft. capacity in small floor space.
★ Extra large frozen food locker (1292 cu. ins. capacity).
★ Glass-topped transparent Crispator.
★ Trigger-type door latch.
★ 2 new design ice trays—quick release cubes.
★ Fold-down top shelf, adjustable middle shelf.
★ Adjustable feet for levelling cabinet.
★ 5 year guarantee on Presmetic sealed unit.
★ Automatic interior light
and a host of other starred features.



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PRESSED STEEL CO. LTD., Cowley, Oxford. London Office & Showrooms · 169 Regent St., W.1

will you marry me..?

Yes?—that's the signal to choose your James Walker Diamond Ring—so worthy of commemorating such a moment—so endearing in beauty and constant in value. If you cannot call at a James Walker branch, choose from the delightful, true and colourful catalogue—FREE on request.

Diamond with Platinum shoulders £14.14.0
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77 BRANCHES IN LONDON AND THE HOME COUNTIES
Write for Ring Catalogue

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NOVEMBER 10, 1951 VOL. 90. No. 2367 PHONE: TEMPLE BAR 2468 GRAMS: HEROICALLY, WESTCENT, LONDON

FREE SPEECH

Women who should not be foster-parents

CRUELTY TO CHILDREN is becoming so common that my wife and I, who have been foster-parents to six boys and six girls, are horrified. We feel that it is inviting trouble to board a child out with a woman who has never experienced being a mother herself.

As far as practicable, children should be given homes where they could have a father as well as a mother, but, in any case, a woman should not be considered as a foster-mother unless she has had children of her own.—H. J. A., Northumberland.

Airlift For Wounded

I WONDER HOW MANY PEOPLE know how the wounded and sick are evacuated from the jungles of Malaya. Always escorted by an Auster, a helicopter flies to the nearest field or jungle clearing and the patient is placed in a basket which protrudes from the side of the helicopter. Often the Auster pilot has to instruct, by wireless, a jungle patrol to prepare a clearing before escorting a helicopter to the scene. Owing to the nature of the ground, the evacuation sometimes has to be carried out with the helicopter hovering a few feet from the ground while the patient is put in the basket.

The enclosed snap shows how it is done. Inside the basket [arrowed] was

a friend of mine being evacuated to a military hospital, after being badly burned. — GUNNER D. B. JAKEMAN, Pahang, Malaya.

The second part of Harry Hopkins's report from Malaya begins on page 25.

As Others See Us

VISITING BRITAIN from New Zealand, I have found it everything I dreamed it would be. But one thing puzzles me. Whenever I ask for directions, I am told that my destination is only "a hundred yards down the street." But the hundred yards always turns out to be a quarter of a mile and to involve a detour round a couple of corners and the crossing of a street or two. I have got used to it now, and it is quite simple to multiply the distance I am given by four so as to know where I am. Maybe it is living in vast cities which causes this illusion, so puzzling to me, accustomed to living in a small town where a hundred yards really is a hundred yards.—MISS JOYCE SKILTON, 120 Aaran Road, London, S.E.6.

Backward Schools

STANDARDS OF EDUCATION in village schools are deplorably low compared with the towns. Successful candidates for the grammar school are almost nil from the villages in this area. Could teachers be given a "refresher" course to bring them up to date? Or could there be an exchange of teachers between village and town, to give country children a chance?—PARENT, Cumberland.

Too Many Bouquets

EVERYBODY SEEMS TO BE looking for a pat on the back and nearly everybody is getting it. Miners are praised for digging coal, farmers for growing food, housewives for being housewives, dockers for loading ships. Isn't it about time this "pat me on the back" attitude of mind was checked. The blunt truth is that not one in a thousand is really putting his back into his work.—ROY PINKERTON, 81 Belle Vale Road, Gateacre, Liverpool.

Learning While You Sit

TALKING TO A FRIEND, who is only fourteen, I found her very well read and able to discuss almost any subject

at great length. When I asked how she managed to find time to read so much, she said that for the past three years she had been baby-sitting once a week—and had been allowed to read the books in the houses she visited.—MISS MAUREEN BUTLER, 25 Tattenbury Road, Basford, Nottingham.

The Forgotten Code

AS ONE OF THE GROWING LEGION of girl motor cyclists, I was brought up on the Highway Code and, looking with fresh eyes on driving, it appals me to see the senseless risks that are taken. The Code should be made law and enforced.—MISS R. E. G., Birmingham.

. . . Driving home from the coast, we were travelling at 30 m.p.h. through a narrow town road when a coach raced past and cut in. Cannot something be done about these aggressive coach drivers?—J. HART, 126 Pitfold Road, London, S.E.12.

Hornblower, The Introvert

OF ALL THE SEAGOING CHARACTERS who have sailed their frigates and ships-of-the-line over a sea of printer's ink, none has so captured our imaginations as that famous nautical introvert Hornblower. For introvert he most certainly is. Hornblower is always the officer who lives in perpetual fear of himself. By this human frailty he endears himself to us.—EDWIN T. BURROWS, 6 Bedford Park, North Hill, Plymouth.

. . . I have in my possession a wallet and a pension paper dated 1793, stating that John Gardener was injured on board His Majesty's Ship *Captain*, and was allowed a pension of £4 a year for injury—"rupture of the left groin"—payable from the chest at Greenwich. I often wondered what sort of ship *Captain* was and how many guns she carried. *Lieutenant Hornblower* gives me an idea.—T. THOMPSON, 19 Carlow Street, Toll Bar, St. Helens, Lancs.

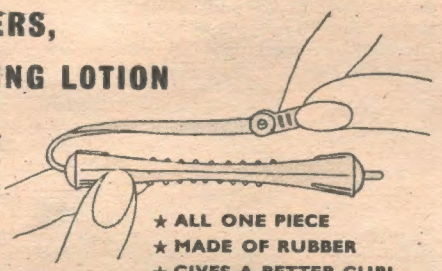
MORE READERS' LETTERS ON PAGE 6

Now marvellous home-perm improvements

give you the loveliest ever 'naturally curly' perm just like the young film stars

That entrancing young English star, JOSEPHINE STUART, *says: "I'm always so proud of my Pin-Up perm. The waves are so soft, so deep and glossy, you'd think my hair was naturally wavy."*

NEW *Quick* CURLERS, FASTER WAVING LOTION



YOU'RE going to be thrilled with your next Pin-Up perm. First, these new Quick curlers — so simple to use, they make winding twice as easy!

Another marvellous improvement. The waving time has been cut by one hour—just think of the saving in time!

And finally, the results. Pin-Up will give you the softest waves you've ever had. Your hair will have all the spring and life of naturally curly hair.

"Pin-Up results certainly *are* thrilling," say the loveliest young stars. "Our hair looks, feels and *behaves* just as though it were naturally wavy." Get *your* Pin-Up outfit today and look your loveliest for the Christmas holidays.

★ ALL ONE PIECE
★ MADE OF RUBBER
★ GIVES A BETTER CURL
★ EASIER TO FASTEN
★ HOLDS HAIR TIGHTER

Introductory Offer

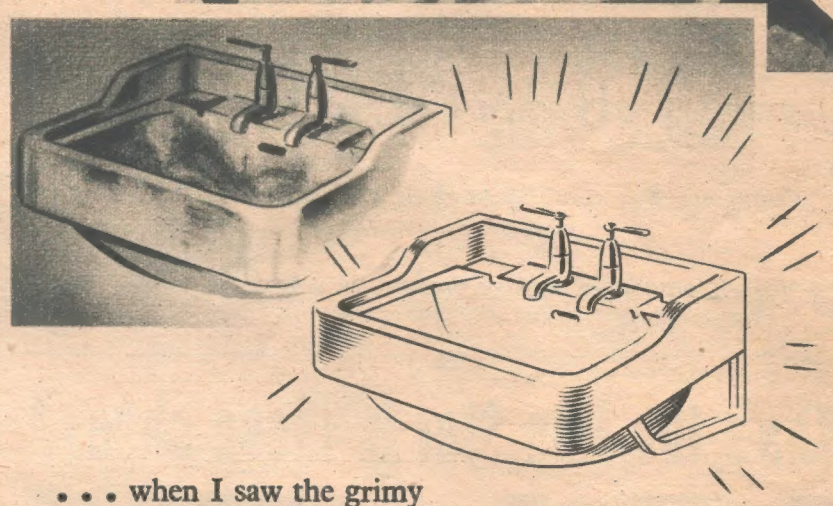
To test out the new Quick curlers, take advantage of this offer—six Quick curlers free with a whole-head Pin-Up Refill. At any chemist(except in the South Wales area) while stocks last 8/4

QUICK CURLER OUTFIT 17/6
JUNIOR SIZE OUTFIT ... 6/-
JUNIOR REFILL 5/-

It's ***Pin-Up*** *that gives the* ***natural*** *wave*

PIN 69-1513

"I stopped dead..!



. . . when I saw the grimy tidemark that young scamp had left! But the thought of Vim heartened me. In a matter of moments all that greasy dirt had vanished and left the cleanest wash-basin you could wish for — thanks to swift, smooth Vim!"

it's **CLEANER** *quicker with* **VIM**

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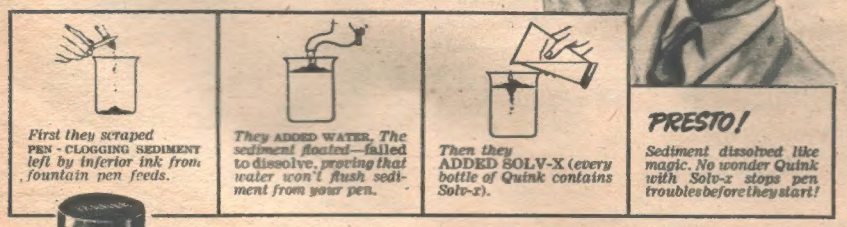
Cleans your pen as it writes!

Scientists made this test!


First they scraped PEN-CLOGGING SEDIMENT left by inferior ink from fountain pen feeds.
They ADDED WATER. The sediment floated—failed to dissolve, proving that water won't flush sediment from your pen.
Then they ADDED SOLV-X (every bottle of Quink contains Solv-x).
PRESTO! Sediment dissolved like magic. No wonder Quink with Solv-x stops pen troubles before they start!

Quink is the protective ink for all good fountain pens. Only Quink contains magic Solv-x to clean and protect your pen as it writes.

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AREN'T SHOES A PRICE DEAR?
I GET MINE AT HALF COST
SOUNDS INTRIGUING-LET ME IN ON IT
SIMPLE WHEN YOU KNOW HOW
SO THAT'S IT-PHILLIPS STICK-A-SOLES-HOW NEAT
YES, THEY DOUBLE THE WEAR AND CAN'T BE SEEN

Take it from me Phillips do double the life of your shoes

Phillips

STICK-A-SOLES AND HEELS

Honestly, what a fuss you make!

It is aggravating when a convalescent refuses good food you have specially prepared for him but his digestion is the best judge of what it can cope with. And often the only nourishment it can retain and assimilate is a cup of Benger's Food. This is because Benger's is already digested before he drinks it and thus puts no strain on his own digestive organs. Benger's is the perfect diet for invalids, old people, and anyone whose stomach is out of order. Always keep a tin of Benger's in the house.

BENGER'S

The only Food that digests milk before you drink it

A partially pre-digested food for invalids, old people and anyone whose digestion is out of order.

Who's the Film Star in these shoes?

THE OCCASION—a charity match. The moment—the kick-off by one of Britain's loveliest stars, wearing perhaps the year's loveliest shoes. She loved their suppleness, their slender grace and that trim punched edging. Who is she? Sally Ann Howes, star of "Honeymoon Deferred."

KEEP THEM SMART WITH NUGGET

USE NUGGET Shoe Polish—it cares for your shoes in *three ways*:—

1. **A quick lasting shine** . . . from Nugget's top-grade waxes.
2. **Better colour** . . . from Nugget's richer stains.
3. **Extra smartness** . . . Nugget keeps leather supple, gives shoes a longer life of smartness.

Try Nugget to-day. Black and *richer* browns—Light Tan, Dark Brown Stain, Ox-Blood Stain.

Keeps shoes smart and supple

FREE SPEECH CONTINUED

NOTICING A REPORT that a woman had been fined because her children had eaten the sweets she had taken home to wrap as an outworker employed by a sweet factory, I was appalled at this revolting practice.

I have always told my children to buy wrapped sweets, in the belief that they are more hygienic, but I do not dare to think of the kind of home into which they may be taken to be wrapped, or of the dirt and disease that may be there. I am told that there is no law under which this practice can be stopped. But is there nothing that we can do about it?—MRS. D. COLLINS, 4 Milton Park, London, N.6.

Top Secret Artists

PAUL BRICKHILL'S thrilling series, *The Dam Busters*, refers to the scale models used to brief the crews for the raids on the Moehne and Eder dams. The constructon of these and many other top secret briefing models was the work of a comparatively small team of airmen and airwomen with whom I served. All of them were talented artists, sculptors and architects in private life and they knew about the planning of the dams raid and many other hush-hush projects long before the operations took place. One of the officers directing this vital work was John Pimlott, now a well-known JOHN BULL illustrator.—EDWARD G. W. WOOD, 46 Meadway, Coulsdon, Surrey.

. . . While I was a prisoner in Germany, I obtained this photograph of the repairs carried out on the Moehne Dam after the raid. It shows in the foreground a German soldier and a group of civilians inspecting the havoc caused by the force of the water. Towards the top of the picture can be

seen one of the wires strung across the dam as an anti-dive-bombing measure and some of the German planes which patrolled the area almost continuously after the raid.—KENNETH WILLIAMS, 36 St. Gurthlac Street, Hereford.

The Worthy Woodpecker

THE FRUIT FARMER who complained that a woodpecker had carried blight on to his trees ("Free Speech," October 13) should remember that it could just as easily have been carried by other birds. We have a woodpecker in our garden regularly and we have seen him turn over an ants' nest and eat the eggs. As ants are a pest in this neighbourhood, this is a point in his favour.—S. R. F. FREED, F.Z.S., 33 Firsby Avenue, Shirley, Surrey.

Stole The Fireworks

ARRIVING HOME in the afternoon with my three children after a visit to their aunt, I was shocked to find that the house had been broken into—pretty obviously by children. The only things taken were my son's fireworks and a piece of chocolate. My husband called in the police. Since then, I have heard people say: "What a fuss to make over a few fireworks!" True, only a few fireworks this time—but what about next time? If young thieves can be caught and admonished after their first venture, a lot of heartache will be saved their parents later on.—MRS. M. PROUD, Northumberland.

Ploughed Back Cabbages

RECENTLY, I HAD MY EYES opened by spending a few days in a village not thirty miles from London. There I saw fields of cabbages being ploughed back into the land, and apples and plums were dropping from the trees in orchards—presumably to lie on the ground and rot. When I asked villagers why such a wicked waste was tolerated, I was told: "There are no buyers." Knowing the prices we pay for vegetables and fruit in the London shops, I am disgusted that this state of affairs should be allowed to go on.—H. W. WARING, 79 Morieux Road, London, E.10.

Fortissimo Voices . . .

LISTENING TO TWO middle-aged women talking in a small café, I was appalled by the volume of their voices. It was impossible to read a paper or even to think of anything except their roaring conversation. This verbal hooliganism is all too common. Do these people talk in the same booming tones round

their own firesides or must they have an unwilling audience at whom they can slam their minds?—S. HICKMAN, 44 Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent.

. . . And Feet

I ATTENDED AN orchestral concert the other day and was much annoyed by the person behind me who kept constantly beating time to the music with his foot. Did he think he was assisting the conductor? I was very much tempted to turn round on him and shout, "Shut up!"—following the example of a famous conductor during a Promenade Concert recital.—HERBERT PARKER, 29 Hamilton Street, Atherton, Manchester.

Sixth Formers, Forward!

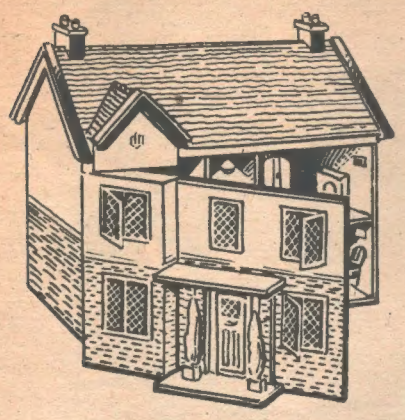
WOULDN'T IT BE A good plan for all sixth form boys and girls to undertake some social work? It is surely a fine thing to grow up able to do something for others without expecting payment, and a few hours' service each week would mean much to people in need of help.—MRS. M. WOOD, 96 Pams Way, Ewell, Surrey.

Letters intended for publication should be marked "Free Speech" and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped, addressed envelope for reply.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

NO marks, regrettably, to these children for kerb drill! A. R. Thomson, R.A., spotted the scene near his Chelsea studio. "The policeman was most impressive," he says. "He watched over those kids like a father."

Build the 'Little Lady'



THIS GRAND

DOLL'S HOUSE

For Only

45/10

(Carriage Paid U.K.)

Any handyman will enjoy making one of these doll's houses from Hobbies Kit No. 2910. The completed house is 1 ft. 5 in. wide and 1 ft. 4½ in. high. Everything necessary to build it is included in the Kit—wood, metal "open and close" windows, door, staircase, hinges, catches, and covering paper for both inside and outside the house. And, of course, complete detailed instructions that anyone can follow.

GET YOURS TODAY AND GIVE THE 'LITTLE LADY' A GRAND CHRISTMAS SURPRISE.

OTHER COMPLETE KITS

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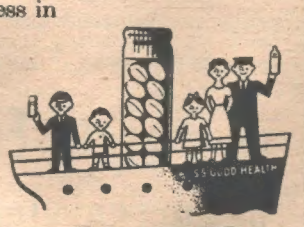

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JOHN BULL November 10 1951

World project story from South Africa

WHITE GIRL

by ORA SCHEEL

The new race law forbade her to marry Piet—unless she could prove she was white

THE TRAIN WAS STANDING AT a country-station platform. Lettie sat straight up in the empty compartment and listened to the footsteps of the new passengers in the corridor.

"Please God, let no one come in here," she prayed. "But if someone must come—not one from my village. Please God."

She had prayed this prayer at every station since they had left Capetown. But God still seemed far away. He had withdrawn from her—was it days ago, or years?—and she was alone with the fear. It lay like a stone on her heart.

She started violently at a rattle of the door, and when the steward looked in and said: "Taking lunch, Miss?" she could not answer at first. "Feeling ill, Miss? You didn't have breakfast either—better have some food now."

"No, thank you. I'm not ill. I . . ." She could not go on. How could she go into the dining saloon. Someone there would be sure to look up and say: *Allamagtig*, look who's here. Lettie Whatsername—that girl that Mevrou Wennig got from Oude-Kraal. What is she doing in a European dining saloon?

"I'll tell the corridor steward to bring you something," said the steward, seeing the tears. "Will soup and sandwiches do?"

Lettie nodded vigorously and tried to smile.

As soon as he had closed the door, she jumped up and looked at her face in the mirror.

How many times had she looked at herself like that for the last week? Almost every hour, every minute, every mirror. Even walking down Adderley Street to work, she peered into mirrors. And still she was not sure.

She leaned closer and peered at her hair. Curly, yes. But not fuzzy. Nobody could call it fuzzy. And many sunburnt people on the beaches on Sundays had darker skins. She had a fairly light skin, light brown hair, and blue eyes—or were they green?

Only the neck—the neck was darker than the

Continued on page 31

She remembered that day with great vividness; her mother had washed and dressed her by the flat stone. Her stepbrothers had looked on

ILLUSTRATED BY K. J. PETTS

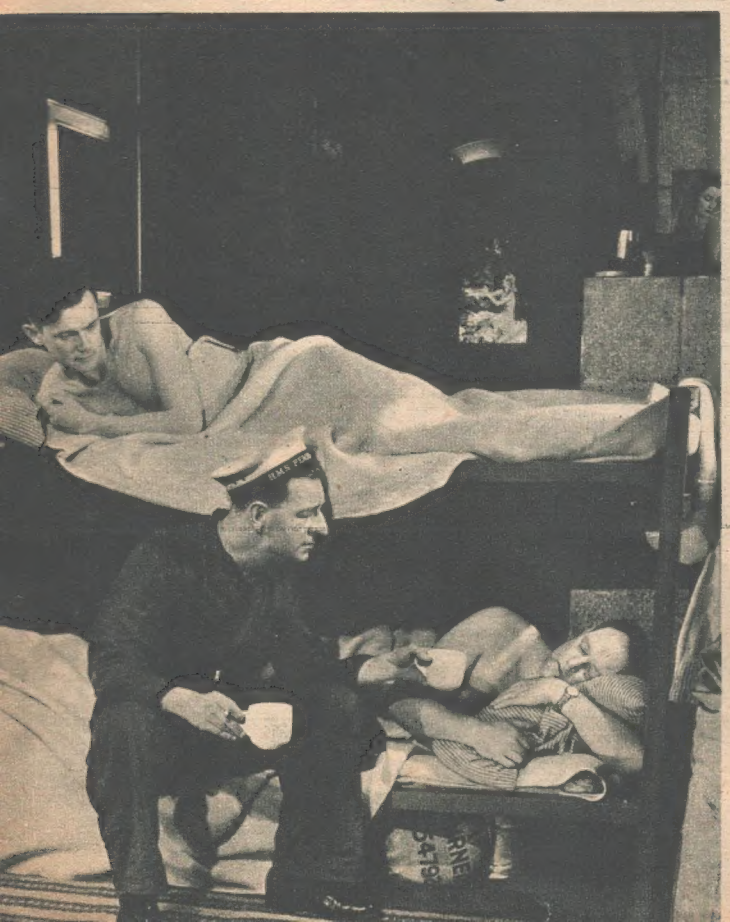
Ronald Shiner, funniest voice on the stage

by IAN BEVAN

He doesn't have to act. Nature endowed the cockney milkman with a voice that makes people laugh as soon as he opens his mouth

Drinking at Churchill's with Harry Meadows (right) and Beryl Sidey, Shiner is still a jovial cockney

"Open up yer pork pies and grab 'old of this," shouts Ronald Shiner in *Seagulls Over Sorrento*



IN A PUB near Berwick Market, not far from Piccadilly Circus, the staff stands prepared every night about six for the entry of a boisterous, cheerful character who undoubtedly ranks as London's most determined extrovert. With a cry of "Wotcher, Cock!" he greets his cronies, lards the barmaid with flowery compliments, and orders a pint of "pig's ear"; then proceeds to dominate the conversation with a flow of barrow-boy gaiety which rises far above such troubles as taxation and the weather.

Much of his talking is done in cockney rhyming slang, which makes it almost meaningless to the uninitiated. "One for the frog," he says, as he orders his last drink. "Frog and toad" rhymes with "road," so that frog has come to mean road in this curious jargon.

An American, who happened to be standing alongside him at the bar recently, listened for a while in bewildered fascination, then challenged the speaker to name every part of his body, from tip to toe, in rhyme. The cockney did it with lightning speed: "Uncle Ned, Barnet Fair, King Lears, mince pies, I suppose, Hampstead Heath, brewer's bung, Jim Mace, east and west, jam tart, Chalk Farms, German bands, Newington Butts, Derby Kelly, Scotch pegs, plates of meat."

"That's terrific," said the American. "You ought to go on the stage. I'm in show business, and I'll tell you a secret: with that sort of talk, you wouldn't have to act. People would laugh as soon as you opened your mouth."

The cockney thanked him for these kind words, finished his drink, walked out of the pub and across the street into the stage door of the theatre where he is currently starring in London's longest running play, *Seagulls Over Sorrento*. Twenty years earlier, he had discovered the same secret: that he only had to start talking to make people laugh.

Bouncing Personality

Today, Ronnie Shiner is the top-ranking cockney comedian of the London stage. There are many who say he never *has* learned to act (a point of view with which he does not quarrel), but through the years he has zealously guarded that richly comic voice which nature, and a council school education, gave him.

It fits perfectly with his homely face, and a personality that has all the bounce of a rubber ball. Seemingly without need of acting technique, he can transform uninspired dialogue into uproarious comedy and make ordinary situations appear riotously farcical. To him goes a large part of the credit for turning a humble little play by an unknown writer into the most fabulous money-spinner of the postwar theatre, for he directed as well as starred in *Worm's Eye View*, which set a new long-run record in the West End and is still minting money in the provinces. To date, his share amounts to more than £20,000.

Shiner rose to being a stage star by way of being a Canadian Mountie, a fishmonger, an Army signaller and a milkman. The common denominator in all four jobs was his love of horses, and he seriously contemplated leaving the stage a couple of years ago to run a riding school: his accountant argued him out of it.

Shiner has "one for the frog" in a West End pub.

Profits From A Social

During his period as a milkman he sang at a social in the local church hall and was subsequently rewarded by several members of the congregation deserting the rival firm and buying their milk from him. This was his first taste of the profits which lie in entertaining, but he would probably never have thought of making the theatre his career if his employer had not gone bankrupt during the depression.

When he began looking for another job, a well-meaning friend of the family advised him to go on the stage, and gave him an introduction to an elderly actor she knew in Camden Town. Shiner went to see him about 11 o'clock one morning and was astonished to be greeted by the actor still in his dressing-gown. Used to rising at 5 a.m. for the milk round, Shiner was honestly shocked by this evidence of slothful ease in the theatre. He remains an early riser, which is a great asset these days when he has to fit filming in with his stage work.

All the actor could do was to give him a list of agents where he might look for a part. Shiner began early the next morning, and by mid-afternoon had realized that a youngster with no looks and no experience stood very little chance.

Second from the last on his list was an agency on the third floor of a shabby building in St. Martin's Lane. He climbed up the stairs to find a long queue waiting in the corridor. One day had been enough to teach him that where there was a queue they were casting, so he waited. Soon he noticed that most people went in the first door on the left, came out a few minutes later looking glum, turned right and walked downstairs. A few happier souls turned left and walked into the second door along the corridor.

"Use your loaf, my boy," Ronnie told himself, and when his turn came he walked directly

With him, William Hartnell and Bernard Lee (right) of *Seagulls Over Sorrento*, and Vivienne Byerley

in through the second door. Here, Russell Thorndike, the actor-manager, was interviewing people who were already supposed to have been vetted by the agent in the first room and passed along as likely candidates.

"What experience?" asked Thorndike.

"I've been very successful in concert parties," said Shiner, remembering the church social.

"Can you A.S.M.?" said the actor.

Shiner said he could, without the faintest idea that the initials stood for assistant stage manager, and so he was cast for a small part in Thorndike's tour of *Dr. Syn*, with the additional job of A.S.M. "Never tell a cockney," he says nowadays, "that it doesn't pay to be cheeky."

From that day, he has rarely been out of a job for more than a few weeks at a time. He played his first cockney part with Milton Rosmer in *Down Our Street* in 1931. No one since then has offered him anything except a cockney part and, if they did, he would refuse. He was born and brought up a cockney, has earned fame and fortune as one, and has no wish to be thought anything else, either on or off stage.

Threw Can Of Hot Tea

Shiner's first job, when he left school at fourteen, was as an apprentice with a firm which made cinematograph cameras. One day a foreman called him "a little ——," to which the apprentice replied by throwing a can of hot tea. That was the end of that. He moved on to being an errand boy with an insurance broker, but gave it up when a pal showed him an advertisement which offered "A Chance Of Adventure" with the Canadian North-West Mounted Police.

The cockney errand boy had to put his age on a year and pose as an experienced horseman before the Mounties would take him. Needless to say, he had never been on a horse in his life. His first nine months in Canada were spent at a riding school. One horse threw him, then dragged him along the ground for 500 yards, which resulted in a three weeks' spell in hospital. The Mounties failed to provide him with adventure, but they made him an expert rider. After he returned to Britain at the end of his term he enlisted in the Royal Corps of Signals, and soon became a champion Army rider.

When his unit was put on draft for India, Shiner happened to be paying court to a girl who lived at Brighton. Distance threatened romance, so he used his savings of £65 to buy himself out of the Army, and his girl friend got him a job with her brother-in-law, who was a fishmonger and greengrocer. He drove a horse and cart to market each morning and fetched supplies; then he spent the day delivering orders. He got on well with the horse, but not so well with the girl. When he quarrelled with her, he left the job.

Shrewd Bargaining Hand

From fish and vegetables, it was a short step to a milk round. Shiner liked this job as well as any he had had, and looks back on it with affection. Jokes about milkmen talking to horses never amuse him, for he remembers his own long conversations, which he never regarded as one-sided. If the milk round had not subsided underneath him, he does not doubt that he would still be delivering the morning pint. "In many ways," he says, "I'm sure I'd be just as happy." His wife, who married him when he was a milkman, is prepared to agree.

Once he had learned his way round show business, Shiner became a shrewd hand at driving a bargain and, even in his small part days, achieved a steady prosperity known only to the fortunate few. When Gabriel Pascal wanted him for a very small part in *Caesar and Cleopatra*, he offered him a day's work for a fee of £40. Shiner insisted on two days' work for £80. He ended by working fifty days for £2,000. In the finished film he was seen for only a few seconds and his lines had been cut to the one significant sentence: "It is not enough."

Some months before the war started, he enlisted as a special constable. He was able to eke out his wages by working in films during his time off. He bought a motor cycle on which he travelled between the police station and the film studios. Many times during the war he would go straight from night duty as a constable to one of the studios, where he would flop on to a camp bed and sleep until he was needed on the set.

He also took on a broadcast series to Malta. For it, he invented the cheery catch-cry, "Your old china, Ronnie Shiner." For each weekly programme Shiner interviewed half a dozen families of soldiers in Malta, and sent the boys news of home. His technique of interviewing was deliberately unconventional. Any attempt to receive him in the front parlour was met with: "I'd love a cuppa tea. D'you think we could have it in the kitchen?"

Steel Magnate's Gamble

In 1943, Jack Hulbert—also a special constable—offered him the part of an R.A.F. sergeant in the Hulbert-Cicely Courtneidge musical comedy, *Something in the Air*. Because of his police duties, Shiner was unable to travel with the show during its provincial try-out tour, but he played for the first few days when it opened in Birmingham.

Unknown to Shiner, a member of the audience in Birmingham on one of those few days was H. J. Barlow, a steel magnate from Wednesbury, with an interest in the stage given him by his wife, who enjoyed a weekly visit to the theatre.

Towards the end of the London run of *Something in the Air*, almost eighteen months later, the Barlows went to Wolverhampton repertory theatre and saw the try-out of *Worm's Eye View*, a new play about the R.A.F. Barlow laughed, and recalled the man who had made him laugh in that other R.A.F. play many months earlier. Acting on a hunch, he bought an option on the play. Shiner agreed to direct the play for a provincial tour. Then *Something in the Air* closed, so he decided to play the lead as well.

The tour was a disastrous failure. Barlow decided that his hunch had not been such a good one after all, and Shiner found work in the film studios, but the play stayed in the minds of both men. When Shiner was asked to do a part in *National Velvet* at a London suburban theatre, he agreed on condition that Anthony Hawtrey, boss of the theatre, would also give *Worm's Eye View* another trial.

This time the leading critics came to see it, and several were enthusiastic. Shiner was so confident that he agreed to work for a percentage of the takings. His friends united in telling him he was mad, but it proved the best business deal he ever made. Even so, it came close to failure. Barlow secured a lease on the Whitehall Theatre on fifty-fifty terms, with the guarantee that the landlord's share would reach a minimum of £500 a week within a month. Takings for the first three weeks were £193, £403, £800. In the fourth week, Barlow took emergency action. Trainloads of his employees arrived in London from the north, all equipped with the price of admission, and takings rose to £1,332. The lease was saved, and the play settled down to a five and a half years' run during which the takings never dropped below £1,500.

Always In Service Uniform

Shiner's cockney airman was the hit of the show, and a few years later he repeated his success as a cockney sailor in *Seagulls Over Sorrento*, a play of similar, unsophisticated Service humour which may easily run as long as its predecessor.

For almost ten years, Shiner has not appeared on the stage except in Service uniform; and, in his latest film, *Reluctant Heroes*, he plays a cockney soldier. Off stage, of course, he wears civilian clothes, but his admirers would have little difficulty in recognizing him, for his manner is much the same. If they were in any doubt, it would soon be removed by that strident cockney voice, which has proved as valuable to him as Gigli's golden tenor. THE END

Zero Hour for Cheshire's Flying Ghost

THE DAM BUSTERS (4)

by PAUL BRICKHILL

Brickhill

THE RUHR dams have been smashed. The famous 617 Squadron moves on to new tasks. . . . Paul Brickhill's brilliant book, *The Dam Busters,* serialized exclusively in JOHN BULL, tells the

Cochrane

exciting story of the exploits of this hand-picked team, formed to carry out the weird ideas of Barnes Wallis, one of the greatest wartime inventors. Directed by Air Vice-Marshal Cochrane, now second-in-command of the R.A.F.,

Cheshire

the squadron faces its trickiest job: the most accurate formation flying ever attempted. Leonard Cheshire, the youngest group captain in the R.A.F., has led the squadron since Guy Gibson was ordered to rest soon after the dam-busting raid. He gets his orders.

EARLY IN MAY, 1944, Air Vice-Marshal Cochrane sent for Leonard Cheshire, commander of 617 Squadron, and took him walking in the grounds of headquarters away from listening ears. "You'll be doing no more operations for a month," he said, "and then you'll be doing a very special one. You'll spend the next month training for it. It's going to be dull training, but it may be the most important job you've done. You will have to fly more accurately and carefully than you've ever imagined."

He would say no more, but next day a scientist, Dr. Cockburn, arrived at Woodhall from London and also took Cheshire walking. They sat alone on the grass by the airfield, obviously for privacy, and Cheshire was highly intrigued by the "cloak-and-dagger" atmosphere. Cockburn said: "I understand you can be trusted to keep your mouth shut, so I'm going to tell you something a lot of Cabinet Ministers and generals don't know yet. You know by now that an invasion is coming off very soon. If the weather is right, it will be in about a month, and landings will be made west of Le Havre. We want to fool the Germans into thinking they're going in somewhere else."

Cheshire waited.

"On that night," Cockburn went on, "there's going to be a big convoy, fourteen miles wide, pushing across the Channel at seven knots."

"Sounds a pretty big invasion," Cheshire said.

"That isn't the invasion. They'll be heading towards Cap d'Antifer, on the other side of Le Havre. A diversion."

"I must say," Cheshire said, "it sounds a pretty big diversion. Have they got all those ships to spare?"

"No. They won't be ships. They'll be you and your boys."

Plan To Beat Radar

Cheshire sat up and looked at him. "Us," he said blankly, and then got the glimmerings of the idea. "Dropping window?"

"That's it," said Cockburn. "It's going to need the most precise flying you've ever done. Can you do this—can you all fly in a very wide formation, invisible to each other, and do a lot of intricate manoeuvring, keeping within three seconds of all your timings and within twenty feet of your height?"

"My God! Doesn't sound very possible."

"It'll have to go on for hours and hours," Cockburn said, "so you'll do it in two waves. Eight aircraft for a few hours and then the second eight taking over from them." He went on to explain the technique: lines of aircraft a set distance apart, flying precise courses at precise speeds and height, throwing out "window" —metallized strips to deceive the enemy radar— at intervals of a precise number of seconds. The planes would fly thirty-five seconds on course, turn evenly, fly a reverse course for thirty-two seconds, a slow turn again back to the first course and start throwing out more window. They would thus start the original course again at a point slightly ahead of where the previous one started and the first of the new lot of window would drop from the aircraft at the moment that the first bundle dropped on the previous leg hit the water, so there would be no interruption of the steady blips on the German radar. It would

ILLUSTRATION BY ZELINSKI

go on like that for eight hours, timed to give the effect of a large convoy, several rows of ships deep, moving at seven knots towards France.

"We've got the theory worked out," Cockburn said. "Are you good enough to do it?"

Cheshire said: "I think my crews are good enough for anything, but I don't think they'll be happy doing a stooge job on invasion night."

"It so happens," Cockburn said, "that there'll be no flying job more important on that night. You might tell them that. The fact that they may not be fired at is beside the point."

The training never let up, except for one day when the weather closed in. Otherwise there was no moment, night or day, in the next month when some 617 aircraft were not flying, particularly by night, cruising at a steady 200 m.p.h. on a steady course and height, curving in even turns to reverse courses, turning back on the stop-watch—unspectacular, tedious and demanding meticulous care and skill. Understandably, the crews became restless, and Cheshire, bubbling as ever with ideas, evolved schemes to occupy them. From the commandos, he got the idea of an escape exercise.

Hunted By Home Guard

It was a Sunday afternoon when he lined up all the crews who were not flying, took away their hats and all their money, packed them in covered vans so that they could not see outside, and drove them to different spots twenty miles from the airfield. He warned them that the Home Guard and police had turned out with orders to nab any airman without hats and promised everyone who got back safely a bottle of beer. So the game started.

Some cut across the fields to walk, some stole bikes to pedal, some hitched lifts in lorries. The police and Home Guard nailed at least half of them and there were some thrilling chases across country. One man, running from the Home Guard, fell into a canal; another, caught by a policeman, entered a little too warmly into the

Suddenly suspicious, Cheshire tugged at the tarpaulin covering a shapeless bulk in the lorry. "Bombs," he said in awe. "Wallis's tallboys"

spirit of the thing and laid the constable out with a sizzling punch. After that, the police entered more warmly into the spirit of things, too, and locked six of them up for the night.

With training taking the place of ops at night, the tension had relaxed and the mess had become almost a home from home. Cheshire's ex-film star wife, Constance Binney, was a cheerful influence in the mess. She played the piano beautifully, and after dinner the crews clustered round the piano and sang.

They all sensed the invasion was drawing near. Cheshire had the idea that the Germans might drop paratroops on British airfields on D-Day, so he persuaded the armament section to issue as many air crew as they could with either a revolver, Sten gun, rifle or hand grenade. It was one of his few sad mistakes. For three days life at Woodhall was precarious. First they set dinner-plates up on the lawn near the mess and loosed off at them with Sten guns from the second-floor windows. That palled after a while, so they started lobbing hand grenades in the general direction of the sergeants' mess. At night, Buckley became a terrible menace, keeping a vigil by his bedroom window and loosing off clips from his Sten gun over the heads of late home-comers, so that they had to crawl to bed over the back lawn on their bellies.

Even Witherick, who was known to be too durable for death by any of the known methods of war, commented uncomfortably: "Hell! The only time you're safe on this damn squadron is when you're in the air." It became obvious that German paratroops were less of a menace than the local air crew army, so Cheshire collected all the weapons and returned them to the armoury.

On June 1, Avro experts fitted new automatic pilots in the Lancasters. On June 5, everybody was confined to camp, and at dusk, with guards on the doors of the briefing-room, Cheshire told the crews that the invasion was about to start. The first wave of eight planes took off at about 11 p.m. with twelve men in each aircraft, an extra pilot, extra navigator and three men to drop the bundles of window out.

They made absolutely no mistakes that night, though it would have taken an error of only four seconds in timing to make the convoy suspiciously change position on the German radar. Hour after hour they flew in the blackness over the Channel, turning on stop-watches up and down on reversed courses while the window was tossed out at four-second intervals. Around three o'clock the next morning the second wave of aircraft took over, the trickiest part of all, because they had to come in directly behind, with split-second timing, to carry on. They saw nothing of the invasion.

They were to break away just before dawn, before the light was good enough for the Germans to see from the shore that they had been tricked. By that time they should be within seven miles of the French coast—and that is exactly where they were. Farther north, another squadron was doing a similar task with at least as much success.

They had their reward as they turned for home; the German coastal batteries opened up—not the flak, but the big guns aiming twelve-inch shells by radar prediction at the ghost armada. German E-boats came out from Calais and Boulogne, but they would have needed aerial torpedoes to do any damage.

Troops In Wrong Place

It is history, now, that the Germans really thought that the main invasion was aiming at that area. (In prison camp in the heart of Germany that day, I heard the German radio announcing two huge armadas heading in towards Cap d'Antifer and Calais. We wondered for months what had happened to those convoys.)

Inland from Boulogne and Dieppe, the bulk of the German Army, which should have been hurrying to the real invasion area on the other side of Le Havre, waited . . . and waited, poised to swoop on the armadas that were not there. By the time the Germans woke up to it, other squadrons had blasted bridges over the Seine between them and the invasion, and the Allied troops were consolidating their landings with greater freedom from counter-attack than they had dreamed possible.

Cheshire was driving round the perimeter track with Munro that evening for no particular reason that he can remember, and just beyond the A Flight hardstandings they passed a huge tarpaulin-covered lorry cruising slowly along. "What's that doing here?" Munro murmured, not very curiously, and Cheshire, his head still full of D-Day precautions, said: "Lord knows. Let's find out."

The First Tallboys Arrive

They drove across the lorry's bows; it stopped, and they climbed out of their jeep and went back to the lorry driver. "What have you got in there?" Cheshire asked.

"Boilers for the cookhouse, sir," the driver said.

"Aren't you going the wrong way? The cookhouse is over there." Cheshire waved a hand to the rear.

"Well, I dunno, sir. They told me to deliver them over there." The driver pointed to the far side of the field.

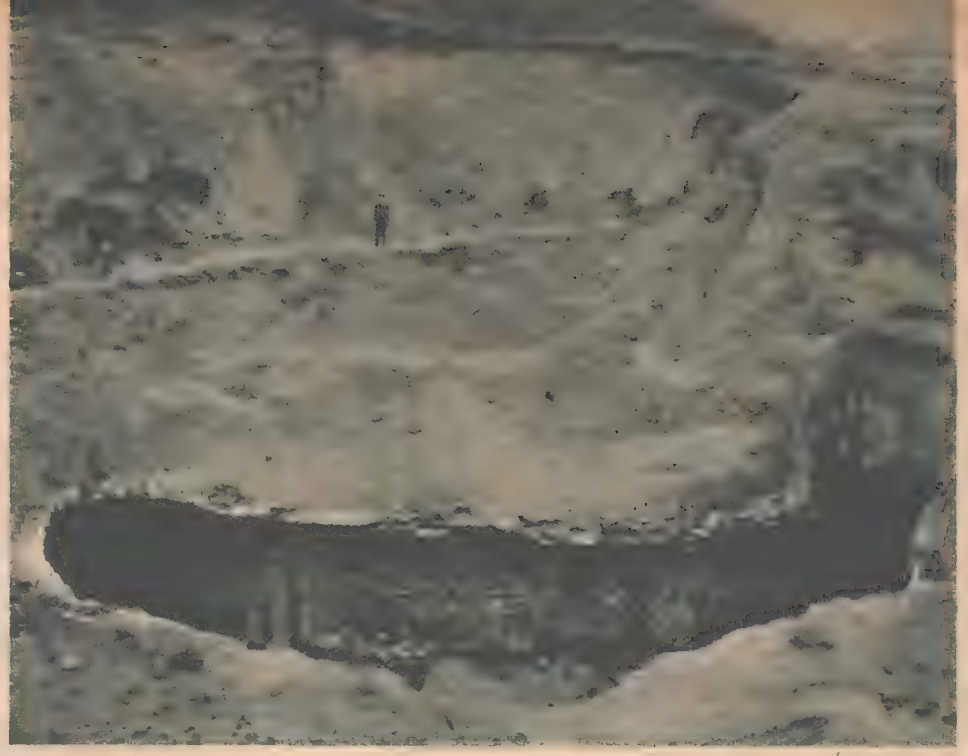
"The bomb dump! That's the bomb dump. Who told you that?" A suspicious edge had crept into Cheshire's voice.

"That's what they told me, sir."

Cheshire said: "Let's have a look at this, Les. Something funny here." He heaved himself up on to the back of the lorry. The huge tarpaulin covered a shapeless bulk, but he managed to tug a corner clear and a grunt of surprise came out of him. "My God!" he said. "Look at these." Lashed to the floor were two shining steel monsters. They were like sharks, slim, streamlined and with sharp noses. "Bombs," Cheshire said, in awe. "Wallis's tallboys!"

They followed the lorry to the bomb dump and were staggered to find the dump nearly full

The extraordinary direct hit on the Saumur tunnel in the first "earthquake bomb" raid. The hill above was blown away



Huge crater over the tunnel, where 10,000 tons of earth were blown up. This raid stopped a panzer division from putting in a counter attack after the D-Day invasion

of tallboys, snugged down under tarpaulins. An armament officer said apologetically: "They've been coming in at night for the past week, sir. I wasn't allowed to tell anybody."

Cheshire raced back to his office and got Cochrane at Group Headquarters on the secret scrambled phone and told him he had just been inspecting "the new boilers for the cookhouse in the bomb dump." He heard what sounded like the ghost of muted amusement in Cochrane's voice: "I thought perhaps you might find out. We should have them working soon. Just see they're safely in cold storage in the meantime."

"Secret Weapon" Gets Ready

Action in producing the tallboys had begun the previous August, when disturbing reports were coming out of Germany about a mysterious new weapon—apparently, Hitler's notorious "secret weapon." Agents could not say what it was, but sensed that it was something special. A couple of escaped prisoners of war reached England with information that hinted at rockets and indicated an area north-east of Luebeck. In the Pas de Calais area thousands of workmen were swarming about monstrous new concrete works. A recce aircraft brought back a photograph of a strange new factory at Peenemuende, north-east of Luebeck. Lying on the ground were pencil-shaped objects that baffled the interpretative men, but, little by little, they began to connect the rocket reports with the pencil-shaped objects and the concrete structures which would be impervious to any R.A.F. bombs. The 12,000-pounder thin-case bomb was nearly ready, but it was a blast bomb, to explode on the ground and knock over buildings. It would not dent masses of concrete half-embedded in the earth.

The spies were right. Sixty miles from London, just behind Calais, Hitler was building his secret weapon blockhouses, fantastic structures which would bombard London and the invasion ports non-stop in spite of anything we could do. They were all of reinforced concrete, walls sixteen feet thick and roofs twenty feet thick. No known bomb would affect them. The Todt Organization promised Hitler that.

At Watton, Wizernes and Siracourt the blockhouses were to be assembly, storage and launching sites for rockets and flying bombs. Twelve thousand slaves were working on them, and deep under the concrete they were carving tunnels and chambers in the chalk and rock where Germans would live and fire their rockets without interruption.

But greatest nightmare of all was the grotesque underworld being burrowed under a twenty feet thick slab of ferro-concrete near Mimoyecques. Here Hitler was preparing his V-3. Little has ever been told about V-3, probably because we never found out much about it. V-3 was the most secret and sinister of all—long-range guns with barrels 500 feet long.

The muzzles would never appear above earth; the entire barrels would be sunk in a shaft that dived at fifty degrees 500 feet into the ground. Hitler was putting fifteen of these guns in at Mimoyecques, five guns side by side in each of three shafts. They were smooth-bore barrels and a huge slow-burning charge would fire a ten-inch shell with a long, steady acceleration so that there would be no destructive heat and pressure in the barrel. In that way the barrels would not quickly wear out as Big Bertha did in the first World War. These were more monstrous in every way than Big Bertha; they fired a bigger shell, could go on firing for a long time and, more important than that, they had a rapid rate of fire. Thick, armour-plate doors in the concrete would slide back when they were ready and then the nest of nightmare guns would pour out six shells a minute on London, 600 tons of explosive a day. They would keep that up accurately day after day, so that in a fortnight London would receive as much high explosive as Berlin received during the whole war. But that fortnight would be only the start of it.

The War Cabinet did not know this, but they *did* know enough to be worried. There were anxious and very secret conferences. Soon the chief executive of the Ministry of Aircraft Production, Air Chief Marshal Sir William Freeman, sent for Barnes Wallis, who was now held in esteem and some awe. Freeman said: "Wallis, do you remember that crazy idea of yours back in 1940 about a bomb?"

"I seem to have had a lot of crazy ideas then," Wallis said wrily.

"I mean about *big* bombs, a ten-tonner and a six-tonner. To penetrate deep into the earth and cause an earthquake."

"Ah, yes," said Wallis, his eyes lighting up. "How soon can you let me have some?"

It was so sudden that Wallis was staggered. He thought a while. "About four or five months," and he added quickly: "That is, if I get facilities. There's a lot of work to it, you know."

"Right. Will you go and see Craven right away? I'll ring him and tell him you're coming over."

Sir Charles Craven, head of Vickers, was also Controller of the Ministry of Aircraft Production. Wallis was shown into his office near Whitehall ten minutes later and, before he could say a word, Craven was booming at him: "What the hell d'you want the services of 20,000 men in Sheffield for?" Apparently Freeman had already been on the phone.

Wallis explained and got the promise of full support. He had little time to relax in the next few weeks. First he held a "Dutch auction" with Roy Chadwick, the chief Avro designer.

"Roy," he said, "can your Lancs carry 17,000 pounds for 250 miles?"

"Oh yes," Chadwick said, "easily."

"Could they carry 19,000 pounds?"

"Oh . . . er . . . I think so."

"Well, now, Roy," Wallis said persuasively. "How about going to the full ten tons?"

"Oh, Good Lord, I don't know about that."

"Now, come on . . . if you tried more powerful engines and strengthened the undercarts."

"Well . . . oh, I suppose it *could* be done."

Faster-than-Sound Bomb

"Thanks," said Wallis, and went off to Sheffield to iron out more of the problems that seemed endless. The bomb had to be made from a *very* special steel; there were only two foundries in the country capable of casting the casings and both were fully occupied on other vital work.

New methods of casting had to be evolved, new forms of heat treatment for hardening so that the bombs could plough into hard ground faster than sound and not break up. The fuses had to stand up to the same shock. There were not enough firms capable of machining the finished bombs. It was a question of finding firms throughout Britain which might be able to machine one each a month. There had to be special machines designed and built to fill them with explosive, and new methods of testing. The Lancasters would have to be extensively modified to carry them, special trucks and dollies designed and built to handle them, and special winches to get them into the aircraft.

While work was proceeding, "Bomber" Harris sent 600 heavy bombers to the rocket centre at Peenemuende. Pathfinders put down their markers and for the first time the main force used

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The Dam Busters To Be Filmed

RICHARD TODD will play the starring rôle of Guy Gibson, V.C., in a film of *The Dam Busters*, to be made by Associated British Pictures at Elstree in February.

The film will be produced by Robert Clark, who made *The Hasty Heart*, and the help of the R.A.F. will be sought to make it one of the outstanding films of the year.

Paul Brickhill will assist with the writing of the film script.

Beetle that can bring down the house

Dr. Fisher is hot on the track of the mysterious home-wrecker that begins at the top, sounds like a mouse and eats like a horse

by RONALD W. CLARK

A TRAVELLING EXHIBITION, run by the Central Office of Information under the not very exciting title of "Dry Rot and Woodworm," set up shop in the cathedral city of Norwich a few weeks ago. Shortly afterwards, a spectator buttonholed the demonstrator, pointed to a display showing a particularly virulent-looking kind of beetle, and remarked: "I've just seen one of those in my kitchen." He then disappeared in the crowd and turned up an hour or so later, complete with beetle in matchbox.

There was a hurried identification, a visit to the kitchen (where a packing case from the Mediterranean was traced as the insect's former home), and another card was put in the file now being built up by Dr. R. C. Fisher in the Forest Products Research Laboratory at Princes Risborough, Bucks.

Suspecting longhorn, a householder visits Princes Risborough for advice. Miss J. M. Taylor and M. G. White, two of the laboratory's experts, show her what the longhorn looks like

The spread in Britain of this particular beetle, the house longhorn—known to entomologists as *hylotrupes bajulus* on account of its long antennae—is something of a mystery.

"What is more," says Dr. Fisher, a friendly little Scotsman who is in charge of the entomological department of the Princes Risborough Laboratory, "when you realize that the larvae burrow away in roof beams for five or more years without giving themselves away, and then emerge as beetles through oval holes anything up to three-eighths of an inch across, you can understand it's a mystery we want to solve."

Among the case-histories studied by Dr. Fisher are examples of roof beams almost completely eaten through, and floorboards that crumble into dust when trodden on. In some Continental countries damage is so universal that the owner of a wooden building is legally bound to insure it against longhorn damage. In Britain, however, extensive damage appears to be a thing of the last twenty-five years. In the Camberley area alone more than a hundred cases of extensive damage due to the house longhorn have been found.

"In fact," says Dr. Fisher, "some people call the insect the Camberley beetle, which is very unfair on the Camberley people. The truth is that the local authorities there are the only ones who have carried out a systematic survey."

Ignorance of how to deal with the pest is one of the main things that Dr. Fisher has to fight.

"I always remember the builder who wrote to us to have the cause of some damage identified," he says. "It was the house longhorn all right and we told him so. Some time afterwards he wrote and told us that he had cut out the obviously infested timber and put in more wood of the same sort. All he had done was to put in more food for the fellows who were still there." Repairs must be made only with wood properly treated with insecticide.

Identifying the house longhorn is quite a problem for the layman. "There are many types," Dr. Fisher explains, "and it's only the house longhorn that causes the real damage. The trouble is that the difference between it and some of the other types can be seen only under the microscope."

Much can be done by training laymen, however, and a short course was recently held for surveyors and sanitary inspectors. The men who attended it are now being helped by builders and plumbers who go into the parts of a house where the longhorn may be at work.

Attics Probed For Clues

Considerable help does come, of course, from local authorities and private householders who send beetles or pieces of infested wood to the laboratory. Following up these leads is the job of E. C. Harris, a tall, dark-haired entomologist who spends a good part of his life crawling about in dark attics, probing with knives, and looking for the clues which betray the presence of the house longhorn to the trained eye.

"A minimum of two hours is needed to go over the vulnerable parts of a normal three-bedroomed house," he says, "and even then it's unwise to say quite certainly that the house longhorn isn't hiding there. The beetles make quite a noise burrowing inside the beams—almost like mice, in fact—and in many cases they've first given themselves away by that. In Germany, amplifiers have been used to track them down. We've tried it here, but the trouble is that every other sound in the house is also amplified."

The worst example of house longhorn damage

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"He never goes to anyone else like that," said Mrs. Tremlett happily. The cat was now thrusting its claws in and out of Christine's best skirt

Johnnie Poothers

by CHARLES ODGER

ILLUSTRATED BY RICHARD O. ROSE

Christine couldn't stand the sight of cats—but this one went with the legacy

THEY SAY CATS ALWAYS make for people who dislike them. There's no denying that cats are perverse creatures and it's certainly true they can pick out in a room full of people the one person who shrinks from the touch of a cat. I can't help thinking it's because cats—most of them, that is: for you can't lay down the law about cats—get so roughly handled by so-called cat lovers.

Some of the old ladies who slobber over cats can't keep their hands off them; and if there's one thing a self-respecting cat likes it is to be left alone. Admired, yes; for they're vain little animals; but stroked and tickled and chucked under the chin by strange hands that smell of scent or worse, no indeed.

The cat who belonged to old Mrs. Tremlett was like the rest of them. He'd put up with any amount of nonsense from her, for he knew which side his bread was buttered. The old lady worshipped him. Nothing was too good for her Johnnie Poothers. Cream in a special saucer, breast of chicken, choice titbits from her own plate; his own chair, with an embroidered cushion to lie on; even a screen to protect him from draughts in winter. Mrs. Tremlett lived alone except for Johnnie Poothers, and on him she lavished all the love she had.

He was an amiable enough cat, nothing much to look at, except of course in the eyes of his devoted owner. Just an ordinary black cat with patches of white on his chest and paws: much too fat, of course, with easy living; but clean like all comfortably placed cats and tolerant enough of the attention and caresses bestowed on him by Mrs. Tremlett's admiring guests.

The old lady had few visitors. Her husband had died when Johnnie Poothers was a kitten, a good ten years ago, leaving her what was generally reckoned to be a tidy little fortune. The old lady lived carefully except for her extravagances for Johnnie's benefit; kept no servants; did all the housework in her overcrowded little house, in which everything was spotlessly clean and nothing ever moved from its accustomed place. Apart from Johnnie Poothers she had only one dominating interest in her life. That was her will.

She never spoke of it directly. But every Saturday, when she invited her relations to

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Who's for six rounds in the boxing booth?

by ELKAN ALLAN

Pop Gage travels the fairs with his mobile ring and challenges the locals to beat his champs. But there are few takers when Randy Turpin, his old protégé, returns for a bout

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPH BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON

Through the microphone, Pop's grandson urges the young men of Stratford-on-Avon to take on one of the professionals on his right. Pop Gage himself, in black hat, sizes up likely comers

MOST MEMBERS OF THE boxing fraternity were astonished when Randolph Turpin became world middleweight champion—but not Johnny Gage, boxing booth proprietor. As the result came through, the fairground crowd was gathering outside his booth before the last of the dozen tournaments he stages daily at the fairs he tours. After he announced the result, he added in his husky voice, "This should not be a surprise to you good people, for I have been telling you for years that Randolph would be champion." The crowd applauded, and Gage received some of the glory of Turpin's victory—a share he had earned.

Grizzled Johnny Gage, born in a showman's caravan sixty-two years ago, has been touring all his life with "Jack Gage's Boxing Stadium, Foremost in Five Reigns," as it says outside. Randolph's brother, Dick, was one of Gage's regular troupe. Of Randy, Gage says: "He was always a good fighter and a fine lad. But he would never have been a champion if he hadn't had his training in the booths."

The Way Champions Started

Tommy Farr, Freddie Mills, Jimmy Driscoll, Pedlar Palmer, Len Johnson and Johnny Basham would agree to that, because these top fighters, among many others, all started their careers in the rough-and-tumble of a booth. Explains Gage: "It toughens a man up, gets him used to all kinds of fighters and all kinds of crowds."

Ever since his father abandoned coconut shies for the more exciting profession of booth proprietor, Gage's red painted wood and canvas tent has been a magnet to all the strong young men who visit the fairs he has toured for forty-five years. They stand with determined unconcern studying the well-painted, brightly coloured pictures which surround the outside platform of the show. Instead of the traditional lurid scenes of knock-outs and carnage, Gage's booth is decorated with representations of royalty at famous boxing matches and portraits of champions. "This helps to convince people that we are a respectable family entertainment," explains Johnny Gage in his slow Gloucestershire burr.

With his dark trilby hat that is never off his head, he looks just like Hollywood's idea of a sympathetic boxing manager. He is, in fact, called "Pop" by his fighters, just as his film equivalent always is. Surprisingly gentle and diffident, he was himself one of the booth's boxers for six years and still packs a punch, although he never uses it. But tough fighters quail before his quick temper. Now he has his son, thirty-eight year old John, and seventeen-year-old grandson, Tom, who is just learning the business, to help him.

The three generations take it in turns to come out on to the stage overlooking the midway of the fair, and attract the passing crowds to the booth with a loudspeaker. "Come closer, come closer, ladies and gentlemen, this way for the boxing," begins the spiel. The crowds willingly stop and listen, turning their attention from the Wild West show on one side and the Human Hairpin on the other.

Soon the professional boxers come out on the platform, half a dozen brawny youths and men with dressing-gowns or jackets over silk shorts. The spieler introduces them, and when the crowd is big enough, he gets the word from below, "*John Audley!*" This means "hurry up" in show talk. If it had been "*Birdlime*" he would have kept talking to hold the queue.

"Now, gentlemen, I am going to issue a challenge to you. If there are any among you who think they can last six rounds against one of the boxers here or alternatively knock him out, put up your hands. I will give these two pound notes to anyone who can do so, no matter who he is. But bear in mind you are coming in for a genuine fight."

Two or three hands go up in the crowd. The strong young men, conscious that the admiring eyes of the girls are upon them, compete for the honour. They toss for who will fight this session, and the winner is matched with the professional nearest his weight. (The unlucky volunteers must wait another hour, when the process starts all over again.) Eight-ounce gloves are thrown down for him to choose his pair, while the crowds file

The challenge is accepted. A local boy (left) fights hard for the £2 prize money against one of Pop Gage's professionals

in, paying their money to one of Mr. Gage's two daughters. Inside, the crowd stand on slatted boards, sloping up from the ring. The atmosphere is hot, smoky, and excited.

The bell rings and the challenger, changed into shorts or with his trousers tucked into his socks, goes in, wildly or warily, according to his tactics. Fights in the booth are always violent and without quarter. With the vision of the £2 prize before him, the challenger tries to land a knock-out blow so as to stop the fight before he tires. And as the professional receives £1 bonus for every challenger he knocks out, he, too, is trying —"a good deal harder than at some proper boxing matches," confides one. Only about one volunteer in three manages to last the six two-minute rounds: the chief mistake of the others is inability to resist the temptation to close their eyes when landing a hard blow.

Most of the boxers employed by Johnny Gage's boxing booth are either professionals or up-and-coming youngsters toughening themselves up for championship fighting. A few are successful professionals who look on the booth as a profitable way to keep in training, and some are successful volunteers who want to make boxing a career. Gage's crew is constantly changing: some stay with him for a season or two, others are local men he employs when he sets up near their homes. At the moment his best boxers are Sammy Reynolds, a squat veteran ("who fought four champions and knows every trick in the game," according to the "spiel"), and tall, curly-haired Johnny Byrnes of Bristol ("who you may confidently expect to make a name for himself"). They travel with the show and are given most of the fighting to do.

Some of the aspirants they fight could almost be said to be professional challengers. Several follow the booth around the fairs and always volunteer for a crack at the prize money. Others quickly dress after one bout and hurry round to the front to volunteer again. Wiry Corporal W. J. Wilde, of the R.A.F., is one of these. "I arrived in Oxford when I was fourteen with twopence in my pocket. The annual St. Giles's Fair was on at the time, and I asked to fight. I managed to win the £1—this was before inflation —and now when I'm on leave I find out where the booth is and have a few fights. Sometimes I stand up, sometimes I'm knocked out."

Randolph Turpin Still Returns

Gage's old friend and protégé, Randolph Turpin, still returns to the booth whenever he can—but he understandably does not receive as many challenges these days. "I don't pay him anything—I can't afford £60,000—but he comes here because he loves the old booth."

Pop Gage likes challengers to win. "It pleases the crowd. We give real money's-worth here. I've had many a gentleman come up to me after the show and say he's seen more for his shilling here than for five guineas at a big boxing match. Of course, things weren't always like that, and booths have got a bad name from the days when they weighted the odds in their own fighter's favour by keeping small, hard gloves for the booth boy and giving the challenger big soft ones.

"And even if he did manage to stand up, the 'boys' would soon bustle him out of his sovereign, either by threats or pick-pocketing. I remember one winner who refused to give up his sovereign, and when they started getting at him, he swallowed it. This didn't stop the jostlers, however. They kept him prisoner at the back of the booth, fed him all kinds of purgatives and waited for the sovereign. They got it in the end."

Today, booths are under the supervision of British Boxing Board of Control inspectors, who lay down the time limit (twelve minutes), the age of boxers (minimum sixteen), and the composition of the ring (not less than fourteen feet square with padded posts, canvas and underfelt). After years of mutual suspicion, the B.B.B.C. and the Showmen's Guild signed an agreement this year on these points.

"The twenty-one booths which work the

country today are considered almost respectable," says Gage. "We are at last being recognized as the boxing equivalent of the village green to cricket. Once mumming booths were despised, but now the theatre is a highly regarded profession." For the sake of "respectability," Gage has discarded the striped pullover and billycock hat, traditional garb of the booth proprietor, and no longer puts on such sensational but irrelevant crowd-drawers as cutting a potato, held in a boxer's mouth, with a sword. But he still has a horn which is blown to attract attention to the booth.

They Prefer Caravan Life

To hear a Gage speak of boxing booths is to listen to a man with a vocation. Says Pop: "I'm happy. I love the booth and I love the life." Adds his son, John: "I consider I'm one of God's chosen people. We go where we like, meet friends all over the place." Living in a crowded caravan without water, electricity or other modern conveniences would be unbearable to many people, but the Gages prefer not to move into a house even in midwinter, when they live in Quedgeley, Gloucestershire. There they have a slightly larger caravan, complete with telephone. "My mother had ten children in a caravan, and I wouldn't live anywhere else in the world," says Pop.

If necessary, the family can provide its own small fair, and sometimes does. Plump, dimpled Evelyn, Pop's wife, goes with him everywhere. "I don't see much of the boxing—I'm too busy making tea for the boys—but I once had a good laugh when the elastic broke and one boxer's pants fell down." Also in the three-truck-plus-trailers outfit are Pop's sister, Lily May, and her husband, who run a shooting gallery; his daughters, Lily and Harriet, who take the money at the booth; Harriet's son, Tom, who spends part of his time on his father's farm; and John and his wife, Maria, who, also, was born in the fairground.

When the Gages start reminiscing, they can go on all night swapping fantastic stories of the ring. Recalls Pop: "I've seen a man knocked out without being knocked down—he was so groggy from previous punishment that when he slipped he stayed down. Then there was a twenty-stone boxer of whom I had great hopes; he ran out of the ring after one stinger on the nose from a fourteen-stone metal worker—and he never came back again. And once one of my best boxers was knocked stone cold for four hours by a man at Frampton-on-Severn who has volunteered to have a go every year for almost as far back as I can remember."

John, lanky and long-faced, breaks into his memories. "Dad started me boxing in the booth when I was fifteen, and I was in the ring for eleven years. I remember once, at Tunbridge Wells, fighting a fellow about twelve stone. Wide open he was, and I knew I had him when I wanted. It was only early rounds, so I kidded him along a little—the customers like to see a bit of a show for their money. I was taking it nice and easy, getting in a blow now and again, and always watching his hands. That's the most important thing to do, because if you know where his hands are, you know when he is likely to try and hit you. But all of a sudden I got a terrific blow on the back of my neck. It knocked me down, and as I went under I thought: where on earth could it have come from? When I woke up, I saw: his brother had jumped into the ring and had a go at me from behind."

Fight For Romantic Girl

Sometimes two locals approach the show wanting to fight each other, either for sporting or for personal reasons. This happened at Pontefract when a girl, who had perhaps read too many romantic novels, instructed rival suitors to fight for her. Gage agreed to stage the fight as a special added attraction. Before a full house the two swains slugged away, with the girl white and tense. After four rounds of being knocked down and staggering up again, the smaller of the two stayed down. "And then the silly girl jumped into the ring, put her arms round the fellow on the floor, and said she would marry him for being so brave."

Women are now seen in the booth as frequently as men, but Gage remembers the first time they ever attended. It was around 1908 in a Welsh mining village. An elderly man, accompanied by his son, asked to see the booth proprietor, Gage's father, in private. He explained that his wife had run off with the lodger and although he had now caught him and wanted to bash him, he did not want to get locked up for it. "Do you want to fight in the booth yourself?" he was asked. "Oh, no, my son here will do it for me," was the reply.

So it was arranged, and the whole village, including the women, turned out to watch. Those who could not crowd into the tent waited outside and were given a running commentary. The lodger won, and there was such a roar of disapproval that it looked as though he was in for another fight—until a woman shouted: "Go on, now; he's won her, let the beggar have her." So they left quietly.

Thirty Shillings In The Hat

By big boxing standards there is little money in the booth. "We're only king for a day," Gage says. "The rest of the time we just struggle along." Takings at a good fair on a good day are sometimes £50 in shillings, and many spectators stay in for six consecutive shows, at a shilling a time. But costs of pitches, maintenance, transport licences and salaries are heavy. In the winter, Gage stores the ring away and goes out with a mobile cinema.

The hat that is passed round after a fight usually yields an extra thirty shillings to split between the two boxers. After a good fight, Pop starts it off with a ten-shilling note out of his own pocket. But they have to work hard for the money: a boxer often finds himself standing up (or lying down) to as many as ten challengers in the course of a twelve-hour day.

Although he now concentrates on the "Southern circuit" between Gloucester and London, returning each year to the same place, Pop's favourite town is Newcastle. "The best boxers in Britain come from there. On a three-day fair a bunch of them would come and watch us the first day, just to size us up, and then send us real fighters the following days. During the depression period, we had them queueing up for the money.

Geordie Was A Good Sport

"They are real sportsmen there. We staged a match between two good locals. One of them had hurt his lower right ribs, and although he had plaster on them, insisted on fighting. In the dressing-room, however, he thought it would be too much of a give-away where to hit, so he changed the plaster over to the left side. When they got in the ring, the other Geordie was such a good sport that he thought to himself: I won't hit him on his bad side; I'll concentrate on where he hasn't got his plaster. So he hit him hard and continually on the exposed part of his chest, breaking the poor chap's ribs, so that he had to go to hospital."

Standing outside in a blaring fairground all day and every day is a tiring job. When Gage gets depressed he cheers himself up with the memory of an incident when a challenger was knocked down. The local referee counted him, "... eight, nine, out!" but the boxer got up and protested: "You've counted too quick, I wasn't out." "Yes, you were," insisted the referee. The crowd joined in, splitting into two factions, but the challenger called for silence, lay down again on the canvas, and called to the referee: "All right, then, start counting again, and you'll see!" THE END

Booth-trained boxers: Jack, Randy and Dick Turpin. Randolph (centre) still looks in on Pop

Pop Gage introduces two of his boxers to the crowd. They get a £1 bonus for every knock-out

A local challenger weighs two pairs of gloves before picking his own and stripping for action

Club for adventure-seekers *by LISA MOYNIHAN*

Some of the club's rolling stones get their fun in a weekend canoe trip; others take potluck in New Guinea. All are searching for what their founder calls "that unique commodity—adventure"

THREE YOUNG ENGLISH GIRLS who had just passed a blood-donors' test in a Geneva hospital were being shown out by the beaming matron. "We shall see you on Friday, then," she said. "It is so gratifying when visitors come to *give* their blood. Do you know," she went on in a shocked tone, "there is a hospital near here which actually pays the donors!"

The three girls—who had been hoping to cover their weekend expenses by this very means—managed to register suitable amazement. Out in the street they looked at each other—and gave relief to their feelings in a burst of laughter. This, after all, was the sort of exigency they had bargained for.

True to their word, but with only the price of the next meal between them, they duly returned to give a half-pint each of blood. The next day they were washing dishes in a nearby hotel and planning the next step in their precarious travels.

For members of Britain's Enterprise Club it is such back-to-the-wall occasions that give zest to travel. Not for them the itineraries of travel agencies, the cautious division of travellers' cheques, the conducted tours of three-star antiquities.

Clerks And Ex-commandos

"To promote, to co-ordinate, to interchange and in brief to deal in that unique commodity —adventure" is the club motto which has attracted 300 members in the past three years. Ex-paratrooper and typist, ex-commando and clerk, they have found adventure in all parts of the world: from hitch-hiking in Switzerland to overlanding across the barren wastes of Central Australia; from globe-trotting in small boats to scaling little-known peaks.

For lively ex-Army sergeant Ivor Davies, founder and president (he is reticent about his age but admits he may be "older than he looks"), the club is the fulfilment of a prewar dream. "It was while I was employed as an insurance agent—probably the worst ever allowed on the road," he says, "that I awoke to the fact that red tape was strangling me to a mental death." But it was not until March, 1948, that Davies realized his ambition. In about eighty tobacconists' and newsagents' shop windows throughout London and the suburbs an advertisement appeared. It announced that an adventure club was being formed. Davies got about 100 replies.

Thirty Earnest Members

And, on an appropriately wild and blustering day, thirty eager people—ten women among them—crowded into the little upper room of a Strand restaurant in London, and the Enterprise Club was born. "They were an odd assortment," Davies recalls, "among them a farmer from Alaska, an engine driver, a fifty-year-old circus clown, an ex-parachutist who was prepared to try any diversion bar suicide, a carpenter, a couple of female machinists."

He had expected, paradoxically, to attract the non-adventurous, because "human nature is such a contrary commodity." Instead, he was pleasantly surprised to find that every one of his thirty-strong flock was in earnest. Over coffee and buns they discussed their first plans. The club would be run in sections: climbing, canoeing, boating, caving, globe-trotting, adventurous voyages, hitch-hiking, and—"because we decided there are plenty of thrills even without finds"—archaeology.

"Somebody knew a lot about the dene-holes in Essex, and the archaeology section got cracking first and planned a trip on the spot. Then we came down to earth—we hadn't even got a meeting-place. But within a couple of months we found two basement rooms in Balham. They've proved quite good headquarters. A bit shabby, perhaps—all the furniture is remarkably second-hand and we still have a table made of a door fixed on four pieces of wood—but friendly and welcoming enough for members who have roughed it under haystacks and been stranded, foodless, on mountain peaks.

"And it's proved a testing ground for membership. I'm not very keen on the type who likes to boast about eating whale blubber with the Eskimos but turns up his nose at a cup of tea in a basement. 'Hardship if it's romantic enough' is his slogan, but the real adventurer accepts the unromantic with equal aplomb."

The unromantic side of the club includes a five-shilling annual subscription and a half-crown entrance fee. Davies smiles wryly: "One of our main difficulties is getting a committee of officials who won't themselves get the urge to wander off. They nearly always do."

Subscription From Blood

So reminders about subscriptions go out infrequently—and the money rolls in almost as a surprise, usually with covering notes which tell Davies that one of the flock has managed a day's grape-picking in Spain to send it; another has sold his blood for the fourth time in six months in Switzerland (once in three months is the average); a third has buried herself in quite a profitable antique shop in West Spain and would like to send more before she gets the urge to push off again.

But Davies's softest spot is not necessarily for the loyal sub-senders. It is for the members who help themselves. "In all sections we put people in touch with each other, but quite often our efforts to get somebody the type of adventure they want fail.

"The girl now running the antique shop in West Spain, for instance—we tried unsuccessfully to get her a free berth working her passage to Spain. One day she sat down and made a dozen phone calls, picking at random from the directory under 'Spanish'—the Spanish Chamber of Commerce, Spanish Club, Spanish Embassy and so on. She got a few interviews and was on her way to a job, passage paid, within a fortnight."

Then there were the two girls who started off in the yacht *Leprechaun*, sailing the Atlantic. "They were desperate for an adventurous voyage, but we couldn't find a yacht owner willing to take women in an amateur crew. They answered an advertisement themselves in a yachting magazine, in spite of the fact that it specified men—and convinced the skipper that an all-girl crew would be suitable. Another girl wanted to get to North Africa. I thought I might be able to fix her up and was about to write to her when I got a cable from Cairo: 'Reached here one hop. Unexpected free air passage. Thanks all the same.'"

But there are many occasions when the club, with its growing experience and membership, does help. "But we only give them a send-off," Davies

At Chiswick, club members are busy converting an airborne lifeboat. Ambitious trips are planned

In their basement rooms at Balham, members meet twice a week to plan future trips

Adventure in Britain: members go climbing in Wales

warns. "After that it's up to them. We give advice, too, but don't expect it to be taken. For instance, quite a lot of chaps have been fixed up as amateur crew delivering boats all over the world—that comes under our adventurous voyages section. We recommend that they get their status down clearly in writing before they leave. What happens if they don't?" Davies unfolds the tale of motor vessel X.

A crew of members signed on hurriedly for a boat to be delivered from Sweden to an island in the Indian Ocean. They obtained a written agreement which guaranteed them their expenses and their return passage after delivery—but it did not occur to them to have a time clause inserted.

The sequel was that the trip took seven months instead of the expected two, owing to engine trouble. The crew soon exhausted their savings and found themselves living like paupers for most of the trip. To make matters worse, three professional skippers were involved in the delivery, and the last was a typical old-school, square-rigged mariner who had never encountered an amateur crew. He was not at all pleased when he learned that they hoped to land in Morocco and see the sights when the ship was laid up with engine trouble for the third time.

Skipper Started Piggery

"It was bad luck for them. But if you haven't a sense of humour when you join the club, you soon get one—or resign. At least that last skipper made them smile. He started a piggery on the foredeck—one pig, one small unorthodox Moslem boy to tend the unclean animal, and an orthodox Moslem watchman to watch the boy. The pig fell overboard, so the skipper started a hennery. Then the boat got engine trouble again and that was where the lads had to turn it in," Davies chuckles. "But they're learning. I've just had a letter from one of them solemnly suggesting that in future all club members be warned to take out *adequate* written agreements."

About half the members have regular jobs and their adventure is found at weekends or on holidays. The other half take what Davies calls "prolonged holidays" and the potluck that goes with them. All keep in touch through their spasmodically produced magazine, *Adventurer*, which comes out—if funds allow and the material comes in—about every three months. The prolonged holiday members work awhile, explore awhile. For instance, there is Wag Vale, in his twenties, who has overlanded 3,500 miles in Australia. He worked in a timber mill in Perth, then on to a wheat farm; from there to Kalgoorlie by motor cycle; on to Adelaide, where he met another member and both took work in Sydney as aircraft assemblers.

"But only for a while," says Davies. "Wag flew up to New Guinea and then got a job in Port Moresby as mess supervisor. He's now settling for work—for a spell—in a lead mine." His friend? "Now off in search of uranium in Queensland," says Davies calmly, as though it was as common as catching the 9.25 to the City.

Youngster Got Guide's Job

"Yes, the Advoy section certainly gets around. But so do our climbers and canoeists. One young lad who only got into the club by overstating his age—regretfully we keep eighteen as the minimum—has been all over the Alps with the climbing section. He became so good that he got a job as a guide and was asked to make a speech at an Alpine dinner of experts, though he was the youngest there by years."

The canoe section has no permanent headquarters apart from the club, but a bombed house in Wandsworth has provided a good starting-point for many of them. According to Davies they get as much adventure as their more mobile colleagues. "They take their canoes by devious and tricky routes to the coast—and coastal cruising in the British Isles requires a high standard of seamanship."

Davies tells how one member spent the summer weekends sailing his converted lifeboat around the south coast. On his last trip he was blown ashore and spent an uncomfortable half-hour pounding on the rocks while he bargained with a local fisherman for a tow off.

In fact, Davies takes a special interest in the seaward-bound members, for his own first taste of adventure was at sea. His dreary years as an insurance agent at least allowed him to save enough to buy a boat—a Bristol Channel pilot cutter aptly named *Striving*.

"I knew nothing about fishing, but I met a friendly fisherman. Within days we were up off the west coast of Scotland long-line fishing. Within a couple of months we were broke. But while we'd been coasting around we'd seen basking sharks in the Clyde estuary—thirty feet long and weighing 4½ tons. After a season of ordinary fishing, I spent a year shark fishing. It was a flop—awful weather and hardly a shark to be seen."

Every time the club gets into the news, Davies gets many new applications for membership, usually from people with a definite project in mind. A man wants to go shares in a small boat to sail round the world, working in port as well as on board—he can put up £150; another is penniless but would like to risk a Continental hitch-hike with two others; a third—in Boston—wants four of five partners to sail his 49-ft. Viking on a cruise of the West Indies.

Davies scans his list of members and notes what each one has said they want to do, how much they can pay, what experience they have had. Then he writes a letter to each potential partner.

Round World Relay Race

Just now the club has two boats under conversion at Chiswick—a small lifeboat and an airborne lifeboat. The boating section forms its own working syndicates and goes shares in the boats. All sorts of ambitious trips are planned—a kind of relay race, with a boat as the baton and the world as the track, is under discussion at the moment.

Much thought and planning go into the adventures. But even so, occasionally members with high spirits get at a loose end. Recently, Davies went out of his way to get such a member—one of his keenest climbers—off on a Continental hitch-hike: destination, the Swiss Alps. For the week before, explains Davies good-humouredly, he was among those who had made headlines in the national Press: "Students Climb Skylon."

THE END

Lieutenant Hornblower

by C. S. FORESTER

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

The prisoners were in r

H.M.S. "RENOWN'S" mission was almost a total success. Fort Samaná, commanding the entrance to the bay on Santo Domingo island, had been captured, and a rich pack of Spanish privateers was cooped up in the bay.

But there were problems. In the fort were prisoners—among them a number of women—which the *Renown* was not equipped to carry.

The Spaniards, too, had problems. The privateers were their only means of escape. Behind them on the island, an army of rebelling natives was in control. They proposed to Buckland, in command of the *Renown*, that they

volt—four hundred soldiers with a screaming woman to lead them!

should hand over Port Samaná but be allowed to evacuate their own men and women—and take the privateers with them.

It seemed that Buckland would have to accept these terms. But it would not be a complete victory—and that was what Buckland badly needed. He had taken command after Sawyer, the *Renown's* captain, had mysteriously fallen down a hatch, and he was not looking forward to the inevitable Inquiry.

Much of the credit for the *Renown's* success was young Lieutenant Hornblower's. It was his tactful handling of his superiors and his quick-witted ingenuity that resulted in the capture of the fort. Hornblower was loath to agree to the Spanish terms for surrender and allow the privateers—formidable ships which had been harassing British convoys—to escape. Instead, he outlined a scheme of his own.

Hornblower's plan was for a gun from the *Renown*—now anchored in Samaná Bay—to be hauled up a cliff, carried overland and trained on the privateers in the far reaches of the bay to extort unconditional surrender.

Buckland, anxious for total victory, agreed to the plan. With Bush, his first lieutenant, he returned to the *Renown*, leaving Hornblower in charge of the fort. And at dawn next day, with Bush in command, the operation began.

Bush charged into the fray. A mulatto woman with staring eyes was rallying the swarming Spaniards. He levelled his pistol and fired

PART 6

Putting The Screws On

"TAKE the strain," said Bush, standing on the cliff's edge and looking far, far down to where the launch floated, moored to the buoy and with an anchor astern to keep her steady. Black against the Atlantic blue, two ropes came down from over his head, curving slightly, but almost vertical, down to the buoy. The blocks creaked as the men pulled in on the slack.

Now the gun was mounting up the rope. Beyond the launch's stern it dipped, with the stretching of the cable and the straightening of the curve, until its muzzle was almost in the sea. But the hoisting proceeded steadily, and it rose clear of the water, up, up, up.

"Easy there!" said Bush. "Belay!" The gun had reached the cliff edge. "Move that cat's cradle over this way a couple of feet. Now, sway in. Lower. Good. Cast off those lines."

The gun lay, eight feet of dull bronze, upon the cat's cradle that had been spread to receive it. This was a small area of stout rope-netting, from which diverged, knotted thickly to the central portion, a score or more of individual lines, each laid out separately on the ground.

"We'll get that on its way first. Take a line, each of you marines."

The thirty red-coated marines that Hornblower had sent along from the fort moved up to the cat's cradle. Their non-commissioned officers pushed them into position, and Bush checked to see that each man was there.

"Take hold. Now, all of you together when I give the word. Lift!" The gun rose a foot from the ground as every man exerted himself. "March! Belay that, Sergeant." The sergeant had begun to call the step, but on this irregular ground with every man supporting eighty pounds of weight it was better that they should not try to keep step.

"Halt! Lower!" The gun had moved twenty yards towards the position Bush had selected for it. "Carry on, Sergeant. Keep 'em moving. Not too fast." Marines were only dumb animals, not even machines, and were liable to tire. It was better to be conservative with their strength.

Bush stood at the cliff edge, checking the stores which the seamen had hauled up after the gun. Linstocks and slow match; primers and quills; barricoes of water; handspikes, hammers and nails; everything necessary, he decided. Not merely his professional reputation but his self-respect depended on his having omitted nothing. He waved his flag, and received an answer from the launches. The second launch cast off her mooring line and then, hauling up her anchor, she went off with her consort to pull back round Point Samaná to rejoin *Renown*. Now he was free to walk up to the crest and prepare for action; a glance at the sun assured him that it was less than three hours since sunrise even now.

He organized the final carrying party and started up to the crest. When he reached it, the bay opened below him. He put his glass to his eye; the three vessels were lying at anchor within easy cannon shot of where he stood, and when he swung the glass to his left, he could just make out, far, far away, the two specks which were the flags flying over the fort—the swell of the land hid the body of the building from his sight.

He closed the glass and applied himself to the selection of a level piece of ground on which to lay the timbers for the platform. Already the men with the lightest loads were around him, chattering and pointing excitedly until with a growl he silenced them.

The hammers thumped upon the nails as the crosspieces were nailed into position on the timbers. No sooner had they ceased than the gun carriage was swung up on to it by the lusty efforts of half a dozen men. They attached the tackles and saw to it that the gun-trucks ran easily before chocking them. The marines came staggering up, sweating and gasping, carrying the timber piles. Now was the moment for the trickiest piece of work in the morning's programme; Bush distributed his steadiest men round the carrying ropes, a reliable petty officer on either side to watch that accurate balance was maintained.

"Lift and carry." The gun lay beside the carriage on the platform. "Lift. Lift. Higher Not high enough. Lift, you men!"

There were gasps and grunts as the men struggled to raise the gun. "Keep her at that! Back away, starboard side! Go with 'em, port side. Lift! Bring the bows round now. Steady!"

The gun in its cat's cradle hung precariously over the carriage as Bush lined it up.

"Now back towards me! Steady! Lower! Slowly, damn you! Steady! Forrard a little! Now lower again!"

The gun sank down towards its position on the carriage. It rested there, the trunnions not quite in their holes, the breech not quite in position on the bed.

"Hold it! Berry! Chapman! Handspikes under those trunnions! Ease her along!"

With something of a jar, the ton of metal subsided into its place on the carriage, trunnions home into their holes and breech settled upon the bed. A couple of hands set to work untying the knots that would free the cat's cradle from under the gun, but Berry, gunner's mate, had already snapped the cap-squares down upon the trunnions, and the gun was now a gun, a vital fighting weapon and not an inanimate ingot of metal.

BUSH wiped away the sweat that streamed over his face and neck; even though he had not taken actual physical part in the carrying and heaving he felt the effect of his exertions. He looked at the sun again to judge the time; this was no moment for resting upon his labours.

"Gun's crew fall in!" he ordered. "Load and run up!" He applied his eye to the telescope. "Aim for the schooner," he said. "Take a careful aim."

The gun trucks squeaked as the handspikes trained the gun round.

"Gun laid, sir," reported the gun captain.

"Then fire!"

The gun banged out sharp and clear, a higher-pitched report than the deafening, thunderous roar of the massive twenty-four pounders.

That report would resound round the bay. Even if the shot missed its mark this time, the

men down in those ships would know that the next, or the next, would strike. And over on the southern shore, Villanueva would have his attention called to it, and would know that escape was finally cut off for the men under his command and the women under his protection. Yet all the same, Bush, gazing through the telescope, could mark no fall of the shot.

"Load and fire again. Make sure of your aim."

While they loaded, Bush turned his telescope upon the flags over the fort, until the gun captain's cry told him that loading was completed. The gun banged out, and Bush thought he saw the fleeting black line of the course of the shot.

"You're firing over her. Put the quoins in and reduce the elevation. Try again!"

He looked again at the flags. They were very slowly descending, down out of his sight. Now they rose once more, very slowly, fluttered for a moment at the head of the flagstaff, and sank again. The next time they rose, they remained steady. That was the preconcerted signal. Dipping the colours twice meant that the gun had been heard in the fort and all was well. It was Bush's duty now to complete ten rounds of firing, slowly. Bush watched each round carefully; it seemed likely that the schooner was being hit. Those flying nine-pound balls of iron were crashing through the frail upper works, smashing and destroying.

At the eighth round, something screamed through the air like a banshee two yards over Bush's head, a whirling, irregular scream which died away abruptly behind his back.

"What the hell was that?" demanded Bush.

"The gun's unbushed, sir," said Berry.

"Damnation——" Bush poured out a torrent of blasphemy. This was the climax of days and nights of strain and labour, the bitterest blow that could be imagined, with success almost within their grasp and now snatched away. He walked forward to look at the gun.

The damage was plain. The touchhole in the breech of a gun, especially a bronze gun, was always a weak point. At each round, some small part of the explosion vented itself through the hole, the blast of hot gas and unconsumed powder grains eroding the edges of the hole, enlarging it until the loss of force became severe enough to impair the efficiency of the gun. Then the gun had to be "bushed"; a tapering plug, with a hole pierced through its length and a flange round its base, had to be forced into the touchhole from inside the gun, small end first. The hole in the plug served as the new touchhole, and the explosions of the gun served to drive the plug more and more thoroughly home, until the plug itself began to erode and to weaken, forcing itself up through the touchhole while the flange burned away in the fierce heat of the explosions until at last it would blow itself clean out, as it had done now.

Bush looked at the huge hole in the breech, a full inch wide. "D'ye have a new vent-fitting?" he demanded.

"Well, sir——" Berry began to go slowly through his pockets, while Bush fumed with impatience. "Yes, sir." Berry produced the cast-iron plug that meant so much.

"Lucky for you," said Bush, grimly. "Get it fitted and don't waste any more time."

"Aye, aye, sir. I'll have to file it to size, sir. Then I'll have to put it in place."

"Start work and stop talking. Mr. James!"

"Sir!"

"Run to the fort." Bush took a few steps away from the gun as he spoke, so as to get out of earshot of the men. "Tell Mr. Hornblower that the gun's unbushed. It'll be an hour before we can open fire again. Tell him I'll fire three shots when the gun's ready, and ask him to acknowledge them as before."

"Aye, aye, sir."

At the last moment, Bush remembered something. "Mr. James! Don't make your report in anyone's hearing. Don't let that Spanish fellow, what's-his-name, hear about this. Not if you want to be kind to your backside."

"Aye, aye, sir."

"Run!"

A very long, hot run lay ahead for Mr. James; Bush watched him go and then turned back to the gun. Berry had selected a file from his roll of tools and was sitting on the rear step of the gun scraping away at the plug. Bush sat on the edge of the platform.

The sun was very hot, and the rasp-rasp-rasp of Berry's file was, if anything, soothing.

In a few minutes, fatigue and sleeplessness demanded their due; Bush's eyes closed and his chin sank on his breast. In one second he was asleep, in three he was awake again, with the world whirling round him as he recovered himself from falling over. He felt that he would give anything at all, in this world or the next, to sink quietly on to his side and allow sleep to overwhelm him. He fought the temptation; he was the only officer present and there might be an instant emergency. There was only one thing to do. He rose to his feet, with his weary joints protesting, and began to pace up and down beside the gun platform, up and down in the sunshine, with the sweat pouring off him, while the gun's crew quickly subsided into the sleep he envied them and Berry's file went whit-whit-whit on the vent-fitting.

The minutes dragged by and the sun mounted higher and higher.

"I have it to size now, sir," said Berry at last.

"Then fit it, damn you," said Bush. "You, gun's crew, wake up, there! Rise and shine! Wake up, there!"

While Bush kicked the snoring men awake, Berry produced a length of twine from his pocket. With a slowness that Bush found maddening, he went on with his work.

Bush glared round the horizon to ease his impatience; over towards where the fort lay, a tiny figure was visible coming towards them. Bush clapped a telescope to his eye. It was a white-trousered individual, now running, now walking, and apparently waving his arm as though to attract attention. It might be Wellard; Bush was nearly sure it was.

Meanwhile, Berry seemed to have finished his job.

"Two rounds with one-third charges ought to do it now, sir," he announced. "That'll seat——"

"It can wait a few minutes longer," said Bush, interrupting him with a short-tempered delight in showing this self-satisfied skilled worker that his decisions need not all be treated like Gospel.

Wellard was in clear sight of them all now, running and walking and stumbling over the irregular surface. He reached the gun gasping for breath, sweat running down his face.

"Please, sir——" he began. Bush was about to blare at him for his disrespectful approach, but Wellard anticipated him. He twitched his coat into position, settled his absurd little hat on his head, and stepped forward with all the stiff precision his gasping lungs would allow.

"Mr. Hornblower's respects, sir," he said, raising his hand to his hat brim.

"Well, Mr. Wellard?"

"Please will you not reopen fire, sir."

Wellard's chest was heaving, and that was all he could say between two gasps.

"And why not, pray, Mr. Wellard?"

Even Bush could guess at the answer, but asked the question because the child deserved to be taken seriously.

"The Dons have agreed to a capitulation, sir."

"Good! Those ships there?"

"They'll be our prizes, sir."

"Hurray!" yelled Berry, with his arms in the air.

Five hundred pounds for Buckland, five shillings for Berry, but prize money was something to cheer about in any case. And this was a victory, the destruction of a nest of privateers, the capture of a Spanish regiment, security for convoys going through the Mona Passage. It had only needed the mounting of the gun to search the anchorage to bring the Dons to their senses.

"Very good, Mr. Wellard, thank you," said Bush.

So Wellard could step back and wipe the sweat out of his eyes, and Bush could wonder what item in the terms of the capitulation would be likely to rob him of his next night's rest.

* * *

Bush stood on the quarterdeck of the *Renown* at Buckland's side with his telescope trained on the fort. "The party's leaving there now, sir," he said, and then, after an interval, "The boat's putting off from the landing stage."

The *Renown* swung at her anchor in the mouth of the Gulf of Samaná, and close beside her

Continued on page 34

FROM MY FAMILY ALBUM

This is me, aged eleven, in the last number, "Wheeziana," of the song-and-dance act I used to do on the same bills as my parents, who were known as "Norman Field and Nina Norne —Songs."

I never had any real home—just theatrical lodging-houses and dressing-rooms—and I had been on and off the stage myself from the age of three. On that first occasion, at Cork, the orchestra leader presented me with a blonde doll in a pink dress, and for years afterwards I always looked expectantly at the band leader wherever we were in the hope that I'd be lucky again.

About this time I was billed as "Peggy Summers"—although my parents always called me Joan—and I got £2 10s. a week. A couple of years later my mother strained a muscle, and I graduated into the

grown-up act. When I was fourteen I went into the Windmill chorus, and when I was sacked from there for "not putting over your personality," I became Ernie Lotinga's leading lady at fifteen. I was always in and out of theatres, and still bear the mark of an accident that happened in the stalls when I was seven. The act I was watching was a juggler, and part of his turn was to catch rubber balls on the end of a stick. This time he didn't quite succeed, and the ball bounced back into the auditorium, smashing a glass chandelier, part of which cut into my cheek.

Being a very quiet little girl, I got up politely, blood streaming down my face, and walked all round the back of the theatre, so as not to disturb anyone. When I finally reached my mother's dressing-room, I fainted and had to have a stitch put in.

But the prediction of an old stage-doorkeeper cheered me up.

"You'll be a star one day, my dear," he told me.

He was right. Today she is a film star. *For her name, turn to page 43*

Malaya's Home Guard—now 80,000 strong—at target practice in the jungle. Its rôle is to protect rubber planters' homes and the workers in the plantations

Harry Hopkins reports from Malaya (2)

I MEET THE FIGHTING PLANTERS

Trim lawns, English flowers—their homes look so peaceful. Then you remember the jungle and the bandits—just outside

KAJANG

IN THE SPOTTED DOG—more formally known as the Selangor Club—the planters were giving a party. At night the long, low black-and-white mock Tudor building, which blandly confronts the Government's neo-Moorish offices across the Kuala Lumpur *padang*, looked rather like a ship at sea. From the club's vast lighted verandas the buzz of talk drifted across the dark green oblong of the *padang*.

It was an occasion. For this party the planters were giving to the Suffolks was to celebrate the killing of the hundredth bandit in the Kajang District since the start of the "Emergency." And if you were a Selangor planter that was something to celebrate.

It meant that though the bearded Communist bandit commander, Liew Kon Kim, might still not be in the bag, his notorious "Kajang Gang," which three years ago had strutted openly in the local streets, carrying arms and demanding supplies and money, was now really on the run. It meant that a day might come, after all, when a planter could go about his job without a gun in his hand and special policemen at his elbow.

The man who had got the hundredth bandit was there at the party. He was a second lieutenant named Bob Godfrey, a quiet, unassuming, fair-haired Englishman of 22, a regular soldier from Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, at the start of his career. He had been soldiering in the Malayan jungle for just on a year. "And I can honestly say," he said, "that I've thoroughly enjoyed it." He was, I think, that type of Englishman who lives in an igloo in Greenland or crosses the Atlantic in a small sailing boat just for the sheer joy of it.

Bob Godfrey belonged to "C" Company, which had just claimed its thirty-seventh bandit, thus passing "D" Company, its nearest rival, which had only thirty-six. The statistics were carefully charted on each company office's walls. In fact, everybody at the party was a little conscious that the hundredth bandit celebration was already out of date. An ambush the night before had raised the score to 107.

The man who got bandit No. 107 was the same man who had chalked up Bandit No. 100. In "C" Company lines, pitched on rising ground on the edge of the Bukit Prang rubber estate at Dengkil, Bob Godfrey told me the story.

It was the last day of a four-day patrol in platoon strength. About four in the afternoon, Godfrey took Corporal Ronald Heacock's section and they left the place where they had passed the previous night and moved off to take up their ambush position. It was difficult country on the verge of a vast swamp. The Suffolks knew that swamp: there had been a time when they had patrolled for days through it. Now as the Briggs Plan, designed by Sir Harold Briggs, the director of anti-bandit operations, moved into its final phase the tactics were different. The idea was to stay just outside the swamp on a track and wait for the hungry bandits to come out in search of food and supplies.

Godfrey selected a spot for the ambush on a rubber estate, not very far from the labourers' lines. "It was twenty-five to six and we were just sitting down. The ground was very flat, but scrubby. I was just putting a Bren gun

An Iban tracker, 2nd Lieut. Bob Godfrey and Cpl. Heacock of the Suffolks. Hopkins took this photo after they had bagged Bandit 107

Ex-bandit Tet Min with a bandit food dump he helped the police to find. Before deserting, he took a pot shot at notorious Liew Kon Kim

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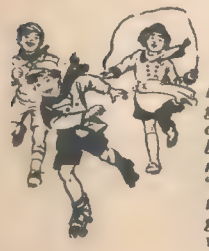

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into position when Private Johnson, the Bren gunner, said: 'Look, sir, somebody's coming down the track on a bicycle!'

"A little Tamil, wearing shorts, was coming down the track towards us. It wasn't curfew time yet and there was nothing to show he wasn't just one of the tappers coming back rather late. That, it seems, was what they'd hoped we would think.

"A moment later, Johnson spoke again: 'Look, sir, there's a second one.'

"I shouted at them: *'Behrente! Mari sini!'* (Malay for "Stop! Come here!"). At the same moment I saw that attached to the back carriers of the bicycles were packs. They were bandit packs. I opened fire, the Bren gunner opened fire, and at the same time I brought the others up into line.

"The bandits fell off the bicycles and rushed into the jungle. But we managed to get the second and the fourth. Two or three got away. We chased after them for a bit through the rubber, but it wasn't any good."

Captured Girl Bandit

The second cyclist turned out to be an Indian who had once lived in the coolie lines. He had been terrorizing the tappers and making them hand over food. When the police warned him, shortly before he was killed, he had vanished into the jungle. The fourth cyclist was a girl, a quite pretty girl of twenty-one, a former Kuala Lumpur schoolteacher.

The contents of the packs were interesting. They contained odd tins of food, Quaker Oats, waterproofed groundsheets of the sort the bandits use for lean-to tents, several hand grenades, Elastoplast dressings, a duplicating machine with several large tubes of ink, Boy Scout jack-knives, medical kit and a large compass. Bob Godfrey showed me the compass. It was a big home-made affair, apparently fashioned from the branch of a tree. Chinese characters, indicating the bearings, encircled the rim.

When the packs and the bodies were further examined, something else came to light—a snapshot. It was dark and smudgy and not much bigger than an inch square. There were two figures on the snapshot, standing closely side by side, a man and a girl. The girl was the fourth cyclist. The man wore rubber-tappers' clothes and had a big, black bushy beard. It was Liew Kon Kim.

Number One Target

After the party at the Selangor Club, one of the planters drove me back through the night to his estate not far from Kajang. Now I was going to see the "civilian" side of it: what it meant to live and work for three years in the middle of a guerrilla war in which you were one of the principal targets. We travelled in the planter's armoured Ford V8.

My planter had been out in Malaya over thirty years. "Things have changed," he said. "When my wife came out to join me seventeen years ago she felt at first a little nervous. I told her then: 'You're safer here than you would be in England. You can walk at night down any road you like and you'll be perfectly safe. And when you are tired and want to get back, just knock at any squatter's hut and ask about a car or a taxi, and they'll do everything they can for you. Because you're a Mem. . . .'"

The car's armour-plating creaked and groaned as we rounded a corner. There were a couple of slots in the steel-covered windows at the side. You could pull back a little steel cover and fire through them. There was a pedal alongside the brake which you pressed to bring the visor at the front dropping down over the windshield.

The headlights lit up a small patrol of soldiers crossing the road. But the villages were dark and empty. The curfew had begun at 7 p.m. "We don't often travel back from Kuala Lumpur at night like this," said the planter. "But we couldn't get into an hotel—and it was a special occasion. We told no one where we were going. We just got in the car and went." That "tell-no-one-where-you-are-going" is one of the leading rules of the road in Malaya today. Another is: "Never come the same way back." Bandits, it appears, rarely ambush a vehicle the first time up a road.

We swept through the deserted Kajang High Street and a few minutes later turned off the road and began to wind up through the 7,000-acre estate. The planter's house, a delightful, infinitely spacious, rambling old place, was set on the smooth green crown of a hill. His dog came out excitedly, jumping around in greeting. The Chinese house-boy took my bag and went to prepare drinks.

Peace Was Deceptive

It was all, I said, very peaceful. The planter smiled and passed across a note that had been awaiting him on the table. It was from the local police lieutenant. The Suffolks, it said, would be in ambush somewhere on the plantation that night. He had therefore taken the liberty of instructing that the plantation's special police should not go out next morning till a later hour.

I was wakened in the morning by the rattle of a lawn-mower. The clear, crisp morning air came into the enormous high-ceilinged room. I got up and looked out over the

ORSON WELLES

Fulfils childhood boast

AT twelve, Orson Welles could quote Shakespeare by the yard, but sums he couldn't—and wouldn't—do. "When I grow up," said the infant prodigy, "I'll have other people doing them for me."

Orson Welles, who is now playing *Othello* on the London stage, has kept his word. He employs a small army of accountants figuring out exactly how much he has earned in his amazing career.

The life story of this *enfant terrible* of show business—his history-making broadcast that panicked a continent, his marriage to lovely Rita Hayworth—is told in a fascinating article by David Clayton in JOHN BULL next week.

green lawns and flowering shrubs that surrounded the bungalow. Fifty yards away there was a barbed wire fence. A yard from the fence, a little Malay sat on a hillock staring into the rubber. A rifle lay across his knee.

The planter showed me the searchlights that were mounted on the corners of the house to play upon the wire. "Of course," he said, "it should be farther away—this compound's too small. But it's far enough to stop them pitching a grenade into the house. At least, it would give us a little warning. . . ."

His wife was already at work in the garden, which was full of English flowers. She took me into the potting shed to show me some more. It seemed altogether idyllic. It seemed impossible to believe that sudden violent death might lurk behind every bush. Yet not very long before the assistant-manager on the plantation had been caught in an ambush in the rubber. He had got away only by a hairsbreadth, and the Indian "conductor" with him had been killed. Every month every planter found his circle of planter friends getting narrower.

She Packs A Gun

The couple from the plantation farther up the road, announced the planter's wife, were coming in for tiffin. "Of course, they're in a much more dangerous position: jungle on all sides of them. When she passes here on the way up, Dorothy always gets her little revolver out of her bag and puts on what she calls her 'running shoes.'"

We got into the armoured Ford again and, with a special policeman with a rifle in the back seat, set off to take a look round the estate. A rubber estate in the morning light—the endless smooth, silver-grey trunks; the dim, high, regular aisles, moving by—has a strange enchanting beauty, like a Japanese print.

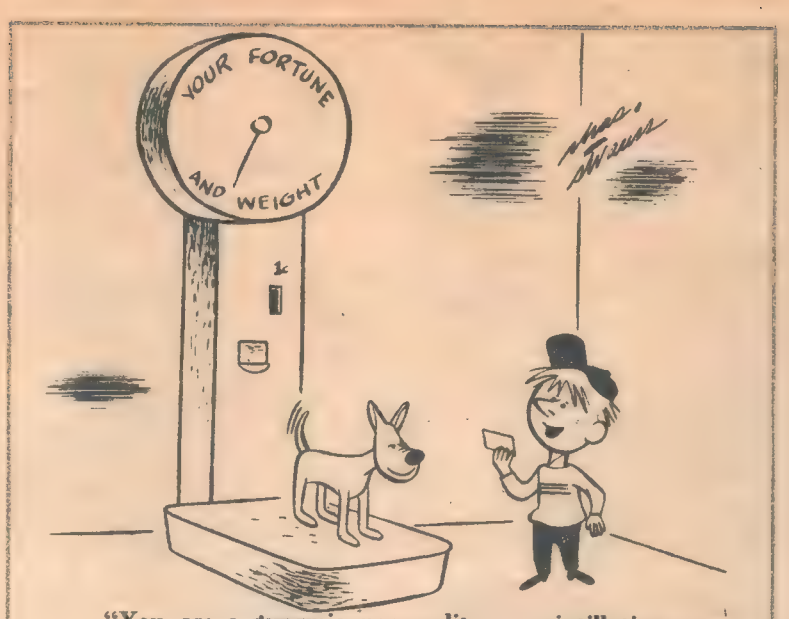
There were grey giants here that were forty years old; then, as all over Malaya, we were passing through acre after acre of new rubber, slender saplings, big heart-shaped leaves oscillating like telegraphs, growing out from a sinister background of dead and withered old trees. In 1957 the white latex would be flowing from the young trees, trebling the yield, adding still more to the fabulous wealth of Malaya—if there was a Malaya.

The planter took me to his "coolie lines," and told me how, on police orders, he had had to "re-group," bringing all the huts together from the various sections of the plantation, then putting the wire around them. The "re-grouping"—in process all over the estates and tin mines—had cost his company £10,000, he complained, without reckoning the cost of the transport now needed to take out the tappers to their working places.

Enter The "Home Guard"

We passed a group of tappers on their morning round, tipping the sticky white fluid from the little pots on the trunks into their collecting pails. Each man or woman does an average of 450 trees, collects ten gallons each of latex a day. Behind the tappers as they worked were ranged in a wide half-circle a dozen Malays and Indians with guns. They were the estate's own private "Home Guard."

The "Home Guard" had been born one day in spring when the tappers returned to their lines soon after they had gone out. Asked why they came back, they explained that



"You are a dynamic personality, a scintillating conversationalist, a patron of the arts . . . and you weigh seven and a half pounds, Blackie"

they had met a group of bandits who had ordered that they must return home and do no tapping for the imperialist exploiters that day.

The next time the bandits repeated this tactic they got a surprise! And though the "Home Guard" merely loosed off their shotguns in their general direction, tapping has not been interfered with since.

Towards noon, the tappers, their day's work done, began to move in on the collection station, their buckets of latex dangling from the handlebars of their bicycles, or lashed to the back carriers. Each bucket of latex, pure white and frothy, uncannily like new milk, was weighed and booked down by a clerk, tested for water content, then poured into the waiting tanker lorry, to the accompaniment of much noise and confusion.

My planter watched the lively scene thoughtfully. "The collecting station," he said, "is always a favourite spot for bandit attacks. As you see, it's too easy. But not now." He indicated the "Home Guard" which had closed in with the tappers and now sat in a watchful circle, under the trees.

Men With A Grievance

The talk among the British planters at tiffin was bitter and aggrieved. They were men with chips on their shoulders. "Politicians" in England were calling them "whisky-swilling planters" and "exploiters of labour"—they were convinced of it. And here they were, a few thousand sober, hard-working men who for three years have been bearing the brunt of the battle, keeping the Empire solvent.

In the isolation of their estates, unable to set foot outside their bungalows without a gun in their hand and a couple of S.C.s (special constables) dogging their steps, they brooded on the monstrous ingratitude of it all, and felt abandoned and betrayed.

"This country," they tell you, "is being run from Whitehall." The Government did nothing. The way things were going, the emergency would go on for ever. "Those S.C.s, for instance—always going to sleep on the job. Well, we planters are sworn in as honorary inspectors. But what can we do? Fine them ten dollars—or three days in the cells. What's that to these chaps?"

And all this business of appealing at the bandit trials. It might be six months after a bandit was caught before he was hanged. The Japs did it better. A gibbet in every village. Yes, that was what you wanted.

But a rubber estate is hardly the best place to go for perspective.

In fact, though there are still weeks when the urbane voice of Radio Malaya begins the 9.30 news each evening with a new recital of ambush and murder, though every mail train is still preceded by its "pilot engine" and concrete-loaded "crash-wagons," though there have been 565 incidents and ninety-five derailments on the line in the last eighteen months, steady progress *is* being made. The Briggs Plan *is* working.

Last Desperate Throw

Resettlement, regrouping, food control, the mobilization of man-power—vast complex processes all of them—are at last beginning to have their effects.

Though, as General Briggs frankly admitted to me, it may still "have to get worse before it gets better," though the planters will probably catch it again, the back of the problem is broken. For what we have now is the last desperate throw of broken, starving, cornered men.

Said Briggs, in that quiet, assured way of his: "The fundamental thing you have to do is to break their morale and increase the morale of the people of the country. That we are doing. The security of the population is definitely improving. Information coming in has improved terrifically. At Segamat, for instance, the police are now getting so much information that they and the Army can't handle it all—they have to pick out the best. There was a time when the bandits had rest camps where they'd go to fatten up for a month or so. You don't find them resting much these days, I can tell you.

"Can they still recruit? Well, we know there were two bandit units in Johore the other day that wanted two hundred recruits between them. One of them managed to get nine, and the other got twenty. The number of surrenders is rising, too."

Millions of surrender leaflets, offering an easy passage to those without blood on their hands, have been rained by the R.A.F. upon the jungle. But once in the jungle it is not easy for a man to have second thoughts. They are watched and checked up on all the time by their leaders. The police are always digging up the bodies of "comrades" who spoke a little too freely.

Yet today, the S.E.P.s (Surrendered Enemy Personnel) have become a standard weapon—and easily the most effective one—in the armoury of the Emergency Propaganda department, which the Federation Government set up under the direction of Hugh Carleton Greene, former director of the B.B.C.'s transmissions to Russia and Iron-curtained Europe.

I found Lam Swee, the most famous S.E.P. of them all; bending over a large sheet of Chinese characters, composing his editorial for the first issue of *New Path News*, which the Government was about to publish for him. A barber by trade, Lam Swee was very high up in Communist Party counsels, Secretary-General of the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions, which set out to take over Malaya after the liberation, and later, when that failed, Political Commissar to the 4th Corps of the Malayan Races Liberation Army in Johore.

Malaya's "Kravchenko"

He was a mild little man of thirty-three, with the figure of a frailish schoolboy of fifteen. He answered my questions carefully and gravely. He had come over, he said, because he believed the policy of armed terrorism followed by the "Central" was entirely against the wishes of the people. In fact, only because of the force of circumstances had he gone into the jungle in the first place. But the Communists said: "Once a Communist, always a Communist, and if you are no longer with the party, all you can do is to commit suicide."

Not being particularly keen on committing suicide, and having read a surrender advertisement in a local newspaper, Lam Swee walked on to the nearest rubber estate and gave himself up to the first special constable he met there.

He handed me a red-covered copy of *My Accusation! Written Against the Blind Struggle of the Communist Party*. It was Lam Swee's personal *I Chose Freedom*. "It's all explained in there," he said.

In a one-month tour through Johore, Negri Sembilan and Malacca, this Malayan "Kravchenko," supported by several other reformed bandits, had visited one hundred villages and towns, making three or four speeches a day, explaining the error of his former ways. "And," added my interpreter as I left, "he's more honest than most of them. People respect him. He's brought in many surrenders."

Back With The Booty

Today, the touring ex-bandit circus is becoming a familiar feature of the Malayan rural scene. With a couple of young Chinese "field officers," and an enormous shiny public address van, I travelled out from Kuala Lumpur to watch one of them in operation. Unfortunately, by the time we reached the Kajang police station to pick up our speakers for the afternoon, the two most eloquent S.E.P.s were otherwise employed—out with a police jungle squad searching for a hidden bandit food dump.

But an hour later we did see the result come in on the back of the jungle squad's lorry—a dozen big acid jars from rubber estate factories, packed tight with rice, ten kerosene tins, also packed with rice, a tin of salt, a tin of oil, a roll of

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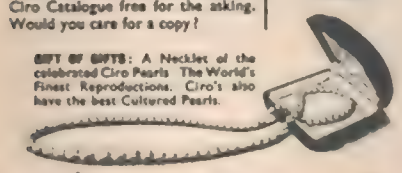

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white paper (for posters) half a dozen exercise books (for diaries), a sheet of canvas, a bundle of candles.

Fragments of earth still clung to the jars. The jungle squad, led by the S.E.P.s, had found them buried in the drainage ditches on a rubber estate. "Probably took them six months to build that up, handful by handful," said police officer Derek Mole, examining the find. "So you see, it does strike quite a heavy blow at them."

I took a picture of the hoard. As I did so a lad in jungle green planted a proprietary foot on one of the kerosene tins, beaming happily. It was Tet Min, the ex-bandit who had led the police squad to the spot.

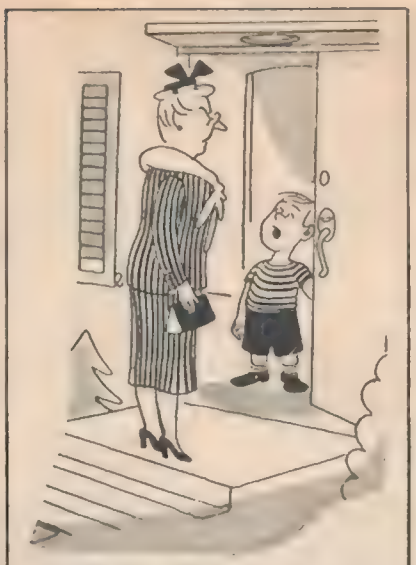
Tet Min was an enthusiast. A rubber-tapper from a squatter area near Kajang, he had spent his late 'teens in the jungle with the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army. When Liew Kon Kim, the local commander, returned to the jungle in 1948, Tet Min had cheerfully gone with him. It made little difference to him that Liew was now fighting the British instead of the Japs. Tet was not the complicated type.

Lost His Stripes

But when, after four years' faithful service, Tet Min, section leader of the 5th section of the 2nd platoon, had suddenly found himself stripped of his rank and shoved back to the ranks, that had been altogether too much. He decided that the time had come to change his allegiance. He would desert—and he would desert in a big way.

He got up early one morning and crawled over from the main camp where he had slept to the small camp where the officers were sleeping. He had just got Liew Kon Kim nicely in his sights and was about to fire when Liew suddenly sat up and grabbed a revolver. Both fired at once. Neither was hit. But Tet Min got away to become the "S.E.P. Who Took a Shot at Liew Kon Kim." Tet Min was an enthusiast.

His experience, however, is symptomatic. The great and glorious Malayan Revolution that seemed about to dawn three years ago is today petering out miserably in the jungle, in endless sordid squabbles, treachery, desertion and murderous assault.



"She's out. Would you care to sit on the steps and wait?"

When the comrades took to the jungle, they did not expect to be there more than one year. After that, as the British Imperialists ruefully confronted a disrupted and ruined economy, they would push out from the first "liberated areas," set up the Malayan Communist Republic, and join hands with their triumphant comrades of Burma and Indonesia and India.

They did not even get to first base. Rubber production reached record heights. The tin mines steadily climbed back towards their prewar output. Planters and miners were killed; labour was terrorized, but production went on.

Gradually the army and the police—expanded to 130,000 men—broke up the M.R.L.A. formations into scattered guerrilla bands. The Politburo, which was to have taken over the government in 1949, meets only once a year. Even the State Committees now find it hard to meet and harder to control their desperate and hungry bands.

They failed, fundamentally, because they never had the people with them. And we failed, too—at first—because we didn't have the people with us, either. When the bandits came round in the morning with a gun, they gave them their "subscriptions." When we came in the afternoon, they obeyed us, too, for much the same reason.

They were, after all, only following rules of the place. For before the war Malaya was not a home, but a gigantic bran-tub full of rich prizes, the most orderly, well-run, hygienic, tropical free-for-all in the world—but a free-for-all nevertheless.

Yet in Malaya things are changing. Necessity has compelled us to attend to matters which wisdom should have dictated long ago. It is being recognized that shareholders are not the only people with shares in Malaya. We have set out to turn a collection of managers and hands and shopkeepers into a nation of citizens, black, brown and white. And we are not doing too badly.

Back in Kajang, the police reckon the bandits are still collecting 500 dollars a week. The majority of the people there are still sitting on the fence. For the fact has to be faced: at the best of times a Chinese does not easily open his mind or give his trust to non-Chinese.

Shot-gun Patrol

But the last thing I saw when I left Kajang was the "Home Guard" drilling on the *padang*. They drilled with long staves and wore blue and white "H.G." armbands. And at 6.45 each evening, they went off to the police station and drew their shot-guns and went, two by two, on their beats round the town. Thanks to them, the curfew hour in the town had been set back to ten o'clock.

Today there are 80,000 of these "Home Guards"—Chinese, Malays, Indians—all over Malaya. To some extent it has been "Sergeant-major's volunteering"—but the Chinese want it that way. "Give us an order," they say, "then the bandits won't shoot us for joining." But once in, they tackle the job with enthusiasm. For perhaps they, too, are now finding something to fight for.

NEXT WEEK: I meet Jack Brazier—British workman who's routing the Colonel Blimps

THE DAM BUSTERS

Continued from page 14

the "master bomber" technique that Gibson had started over the Moehne Dam; a "master of ceremonies" circled low, directing the bombers by radiophone on to the choicest markers, and Peenemuende rocket centre was almost wiped off the map, putting the advent of rockets over England back by six months. Having failed to protect it, Hans Jeschonnek, Hitler's night fighter chief, committed suicide.

The Germans now stopped work on the monster rocket blockhouses across the Channel in order to go ahead with the more dispersed flying-bomb sites. Recce aircraft were bringing back to England photographs showing mysterious new activity in the same areas, the erection of many low, curved buildings in clearings in woods, and, next to them, short sets of rails that seemed to start and end in nothingness. Intelligence men christened them "ski sites," because the long buildings were the same shape as skis; and bit by bit they connected them more definitely with secret weapon reports.

In Whitehall, Churchill, the Air Council, "Bomber" Harris, Sir Stafford Cripps (Minister for Aircraft Production) and Sir Wilfred Freeman discussed the situation uneasily, and Freeman sent for Wallis. "We're stopping work on the ten-ton bomb," he said. "The big targets we had for them aren't so important now."

Wallis did not dispute the logic of it. But he pleaded with Freeman to let him go ahead with a 12,000-pound scaled-down version of the ten-tonner, to penetrate deeply in the same way and cause an earthquake shock. Lancasters could drop them deep inside Germany on the kind of targets he had originally had in mind. Freeman thought for a long time, torn between regulations and his own judgment, and in the end he said "yes," a bold decision for an official. He gave the scaled-down bomb the code-name of "Tallboy"—and it was the first batch of tallboys that Cheshire had discovered being delivered at Woodhall as "the new boilers for the cookhouse."

Forty-eight hours after he had discovered their existence, Cheshire received the call to use them. Intelligence had reported a German *panzer* division moving up from Bordeaux by rail to attack the invasion troops. The trains would have to pass through the Saumur tunnel, near the Loire, more than a hundred miles inland and in the late afternoon Harris suggested to Cochrane that they might have a chance of blocking the tunnel before the trains reached it.

About 5 p.m. Cheshire got the order to take off as soon as they could, and there was a mad rush to collect everyone (Shannon and Munro, for instance, were playing cricket at Metheringham). They were airborne soon after dusk, and it was shortly after midnight that Cheshire, in a Mosquito, dropped flares by the bend of a river and saw where the rails vanished into the tunnel that led under the Saumur hill.

He dive-bombed from 3,000 feet, aimed his red spots point-blank and, as he pulled up from about a hundred feet, saw them lying beautifully in the tunnel mouth. Ninety seconds later the Lancasters were steady on their bombing runs, and a couple of minutes later the first earthquake bombs ever dropped on business were streaking down.

Ten thousand feet above, the crews felt disappointed. The tallboys did not make a splash of brilliant light like the blockbusters, but showed only momentary red pinpoints as they speared into the earth and exploded nearly a hundred feet deep. The little flashes they made were all round the markers, but the crews turned for home with a feeling

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INGREDIENTS

1 breakfast cup each, sultanas and currants; ¾ breakfast cup white or brown sugar; 1 tablespoon black treacle or ½ teaspoon liquid gravy browning; ½ breakfast cup milk; 9 roughly crushed Weetabix or 1½ breakfast cups Weetabix Crumbs; ¾ breakfast cup self-raising flour; ½ teaspoon salt (*not* if gravy browning used); 1 teaspoon mixed spice; ¾ breakfast cup shredded suet; juice and grated rind of ½ lemon; ½ breakfast cup mixed chopped peel; ¾ breakfast cup grated raw potato; 1 breakfast cup grated raw carrot.

METHOD

Wash dried fruit 2 days before making the pudding and leave to drain in a colander. Melt sugar and treacle in the milk and boil, stirring always to prevent sticking, until a little forms a fairly firm ball when tested in cold water. Add Weetabix crumbs and leave until cold. Sift flour, salt and spice into a large mixing bowl. Add suet, cold Weetabix crumb mixture, and lastly, fruit, peel, lemon, potato and carrot. Turn into a well-greased pudding bowl, cover with greased greaseproof paper and tie or twist tightly. Stand on a trivet with water halfway up bowl, cover tightly and boil for 2½-3 hours Serve with custard flavoured with vanilla, lemon or brandy.

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Weetabix *is so useful in so many ways!*

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of anticlimax, and it was not till the recce Mosquito landed next morning with the photographs that the impact of what they had done hit them. With one exception, the fantastic craters were round the tunnel mouth, two of them in a line along the rails, as though giant bites a hundred feet across and seventy feet deep had been torn out of the track bed.

But what really staggered everybody was the bomb that had fallen on the hill sixty yards from the tunnel mouth. The hill rose steeply, and under the spot where the bomb hit lay seventy feet of solid earth and chalk down to the tunnel. The bomb had bored straight through it into the tunnel itself and exploded there. Something like 10,000 tons of earth and chalk were blown sky-high and the mountain collapsed into the tunnel. It was one of the most startling direct hits of all time.

The *panzer* division did not get through. It was several days before dribs and drabs of them started to reach the invasion front on other transport, but by then it was too late.

Making A Tidal Wave

In the nights that followed the invasion, German E-boats, sneaking out of Le Havre, caused death and destruction among the convoys ferrying men and guns over to Normandy. By day they sheltered in the concrete pens at Le Havre, and around dusk they slid out of the pens and gathered in the harbour, preparing for the night's forays. Cochrane thought that if the tallboys could make an earthquake on land, they might just as easily make a tidal wave on water. Wallis promised him they would, and so, as soon as the weather cleared, on June 14, 617 flew over at dusk to Le Havre on the second tallboy raid. Some 400 more Lancasters of 1 and 5 Groups followed, loaded with 1,000-pound bombs.

Cheshire, in his Mosquito, whipped round the harbour area at 3,000 feet, saw the dozens of E-boats lined up, and, as he peeled off in a dive-bombing attack, the flak came up in streams. He had never seen flak like it. In the dusk it looked like green and red bubbles rising in shaken soda-water. The air was full of rushing tracer, and he knew that that was not even half of it—only a quarter. One in four of the light flak shells was tracing; the rest were rushing with them, but not visible. Two miles outside the harbour the other Mosquitos saw him diving into the beaded curtain of red and green and thought he had no chance. At about 700 feet (as he let his markers go) they saw the nose start to come up. The little Mosquito flattened low over the water, holed half a dozen times already, and Cheshire held her straight, heading out to sea, relying on speed alone to beat the guns. A minute later he was back to 3,000 feet and out of range. On the quay by the lines of E-boats the red markers were winking clearly.

Shannon, deputy marker, who had seen the flak like a wall of flame, called up: "Hallo, Leader, shall I go in and back up?" Sitting beside and slightly behind him, Sumpter picked a heavy torch out of the stowage, held it over Shannon's head and muttered: "God, David! If he says yes, I'll brain you. We can die more peacefully out here."

A few seconds dragged while Cheshire looked again at his markers and called back: "No, David, they'll do," and ordered the Lancasters circling a few miles away at 12,000 feet to head in. Fifteen tallboys dropped almost together into the water by the pens, and then the 400 other Lancasters moved in and the harbour vanished under smoke.

When the recce photographs came back in the morning, even Wallis was staggered. Not one E-boat was left afloat in Le Havre. Two were still visible, thrown bodily up on to the quay, and the rest were swallowed in the maelstrom of water, torn apart by the tallboys and then by the smaller bombs. For a time, they thought that some might have slunk out of the harbour that night to a safer port, but weeks after, when the British took Le Havre, they found that none had escaped. The crashing water had smashed the doors of the pens and destroyed any chance of shelter in them. In fact, three of the tallboys, direct hits on the pens, had bored through the concrete and wrecked the neat little quays inside.

"Major Naval Victory"

Next night the squadron went to repeat the dose at Boulogne, also a troublesome E-boat base. Thick cloud hung over the port with heavy flak bursting through it. About ten were able to drop their tallboys without being able to see results, and the remaining ten brought their bombs back. (Cochrane had made a strict order that no tallboys were to be wasted. Crews were never to jettison them except in extreme emergency. If they could not see their target reasonably clearly, they must bring the tallboy back. Landing an aircraft with a six-ton bomb on board is not as difficult as it sounds.)

We know now that in these two raids on Le Havre and Boulogne, 133 small ships (mostly E-boats) were sunk. As Harris said, the morning after Boulogne, in his message of thanks to Cheshire and the squadron: "If the Navy had done what you have done, it would have been a major naval victory."

NEXT WEEK: The dramatic battle against Hitler's secret weapons

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WHITE GIRL

Continued from page 9

face. She opened her suitcase and took out a bottle and a wad of cotton-wool. Tears again filled her eyes as she rubbed her neck with the bleaching lotion.

I must stop this crying, she thought, it will never do. Mevrou does not like tears.

If she had never met Piet, it would not have hurt so much, this fear. Piet loved her. He had come from a Karroo farm to work in Capetown for the railways. Whenever his train was in, he came straight to the café and she served him. All the other girls knew that and never interfered. Madam said she loved his merry smile—such white teeth in his dark face.

Dark face, dark eyes—the girls teased her and said he was a gipsy. That was how it had begun. They had joked and said: "You and your tall, dark, handsome boy—careful, there are laws now about *apartheid*."

She had heard that word before, but it had meant nothing to her.

"What is that *apartheid*?" she had asked, smiling.

"Ach," said Alice, "my gosh, don't you know? It is to keep the race pure. No people with coloured blood may mix with or marry white people any more. And high time, too. . . . Why are you looking so scared? We are only joking. Your Piet is as white as you are!"

The heavy, dark weight of the fear had then come down upon her. Every newspaper was a terrible enemy. Whenever she could, she looked through all the columns, reading only those about the new laws, reading feverishly and furtively, only half understanding. Registration cards—names of parents?

At night, in her little room, her thoughts had gone round and round. Somehow she would have to tell her story, explain to Piet. She would write to the Government:

Dear Sir, When I was seven I was taken away from the house where I lived by Mevrou Wennig. I don't remember very much before then, I don't know any father. My mother had blue eyes. Dear Sir, don't ask me any more. I don't look coloured. I love Piet. Piet knows his father and grandfather, and even farther back than that. . . .

All night she had lain awake, pleading with the Government. She would have to tell the whole truth, everything. Everything. . . .

My mother had blue eyes. She lived in an old tumble-down house at the foot of a hill on a deserted farm called Oude-Kraal. There was a little river and old mulberry trees; across the river many poplar trees, and then the wide sandy valley, and beyond that you climb up a *krantz* and walk into the village.

I often herded goats in that valley.

We did not often go into the village. Only my mother went to fetch washing and take it back again. She always wore narrow-waisted, long skirts and a *kappie*. Straight and tall and slender she was, with the bundle on her head, and her skirt swished over the green *vleigrass*.

The man in our house was brown, and the other children were brown, too.

Then one day the burgomaster's wife visited us.

She came to my mother, who was washing on a flat stone. She said: "Antjie, I want to speak to you again. Listen to me. Your eldest child is never Hendrik's child. That girl is a white man's child. Her hair is fair and her skin is white. Give her to me. She cannot grow up here with your coloured children. Antjie, you must listen."

I knew she spoke about me and I looked at my mother's face under the *kappie* when she turned around from the washing. Perhaps it was the first time I had ever really looked at her. Thin and yellow that face was, with the eyes sunk far back into the head, but they were blue. When she spoke she was hoarse because she never spoke much.

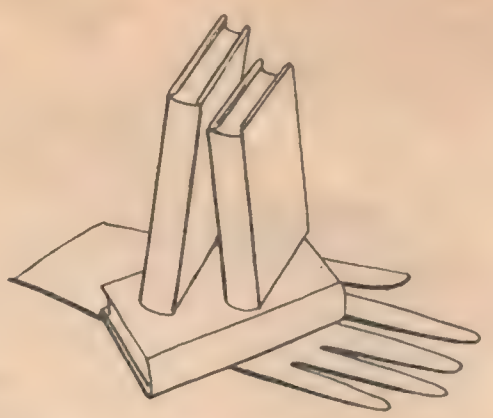
"Hendrik will never give away that child. He is very proud of that child," she said, wiping the soap from her hands.

Mevrou put down her sunshade and closed it. She wiped her face with her handkerchief. I smelt her perfume. I can still smell it.

"We will be good to the child and teach her housework and sewing. She can work for us when she is older. We will clothe her and feed her. Later on, if she wishes, she could go out and earn money."

"I will speak to Hendrik tonight," said my mother, hoarser now than before, and took up her soap again. "Maybe he will let me bring you the child tomorrow."

Mevrou looked at the *kappie* bent over the washing and said: "All right, Antjie, tomorrow. But for



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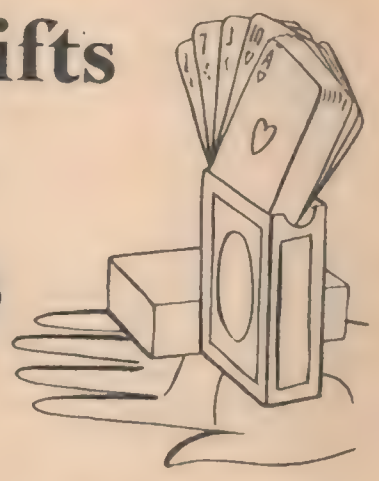

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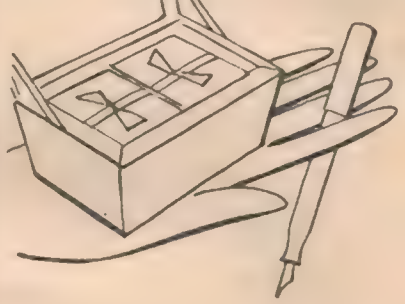

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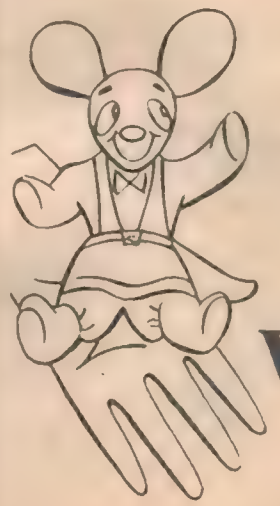

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certain." I sat there in the mulberry tree and watched her go.

That night I was not sent to bed with the other children. I stood next to the table where my mother ironed my one whole frock. I broke bits of wax off the candle and worked them into round, soft balls.

The next morning my mother took me to the flat stone and washed my hair and body and put the clean frock on me. The young ones, my stepbrothers, looked on as my mother took me by the hand and we walked across the stream. At the poplars, I looked back at them. They were in the tree, eating mulberries.

At the back door of the burgomaster's house, my mother spoke before Mevrou had said a word.

"Here is Lettie. Hendrik says Mevrou must be good to the child."

Mevrou took me into the kitchen and when I looked around again my mother was not there.

I WAS afraid, the first night in that little room on the stoep. The roof was dark and solid. At Oude-Kraal the roof was half open and I could see the stars at night. The younger children slept there with me, on sacks filled with straw. Now Mevrou took away the candle and I lay alone in this strange bed. But I liked the smell of the bath soap, and the new nightdress.

The Oude-Kraal children came to the garden gate one day and called out to me. I went to them, but then Mevrou came out with sweets and cakes for them and spoke to them softly. Then they went away.

After that I did not see the brown children again. That day Meneer bought me a beautiful doll with real hair and eyelashes. He was kind to me, but I was a little afraid of him. I always thought he did not want me there in his house.

My mother, Antjie, never again came near the house.

I always remembered that Mevrou had said: "Lettie is a white man's child, Antjie."

I remember, too, one day Mevrou said to visitors that my mother was pure white. She said she had made sure of that. I stood in the next room and heard them talking.

"It is an awful tragedy," said Mevrou. "Antjie is quite half-witted and no one seems to have bothered about her. My husband was terribly upset when I said I wanted Lettie, but I got my own way. I could not bear to see her there at Oude-Kraal."

Dear Sir. . . .

Night after night Lettie had lain awake, seeing half-forgotten scenes from her childhood again; composing letters to the Government; explaining to Piet. In the end, she had gone hysterically to Madam.

Madam had been silent for a long time, playing with a pencil on her desk. Then she sighed. "Don't you have any idea who your white father might have been?"

Lettie had none. She had seldom played with other children and had no intimate friends in the village.

"Didn't you go to school?"

"Oh, no." Mevrou had taught her at home. Sometimes Meneer also looked at her work, but he was mostly busy in his office and did not have time. Mevrou taught her sewing and cooking, too. Both of them were very good to her.

"I see Mevrou still writes to you regularly. So you are still on good terms?"

"Oh, yes, every fortnight she writes."

"Well," Madam said, and sighed again, "maybe those new laws will not be so strict. I do not know. But if you are going to worry like this, why not go home to Mevrou and try to find out who your father was? It may not be so easy. But try. Is your mother still alive?"

Yes, Lettie thought so. When she had left home they had still been at Oude-Kraal.

And so it had come about that Lettie was here on the train now. Alone in the train, with that awful fear in her heart; rubbing her skin with a bleaching lotion and watching the mountains of home come nearer.

Mevrou was on the station to meet her. Grey-haired now, but still slender, cool and kind. Lettie longed to fall round her neck and weep, but she knew better. As far back as she could remember, Mevrou had never hugged nor petted her. But that was to be expected.

There was a new car and Mevrou drove it herself, and they rolled out along the winding road to their village, twelve miles away.

As soon as they were over the railway crossing, she said, without taking her eyes off the road: "Well, Lettie, what is wrong?"

Lettie's lips were stiff, and her heart beating so hard that she felt suffocated. "I have written to you about Piet. He wants to marry me. Now there are these new laws—I mean about *apartheid*—and I must perhaps put my father's name on a card. I have heard Mevrou say that my father was white. But I only know that I came from Oude-Kraal. Does Mevrou know who my white father was?"

With a slithering of brakes, the car stopped there in the blue-gum avenue and for the first time in her life Lettie felt Mevrou's arms around her.

"Poor child. Oh, you poor child."

It was good to sit like this. The cicadas were shrill in the blue-gum trees, but it seemed peaceful here, almost safe.

"Oh, Mevrou, why was I ever born?" she groaned.

"Now, Lettie, don't start crying again; your eyes are red enough." Mevrou Wennig turned away and started the car. "We'll go home and speak of this to Meneer."

Meneer seemed smaller than she remembered. A little, worried-looking, bald man, who disappeared into his study after supper as usual. But Mevrou followed him and shut the door.

Then Lettie sat in her old room on the bed, looking at the snapshot of Piet that she had shown Mevrou. She couldn't unpack. She could do nothing. When she heard the study

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Boy who'll get on

A BOY who has just left school showed me his report. At the bottom, the headmaster had written: "I have never known him say an unkind word about anyone."

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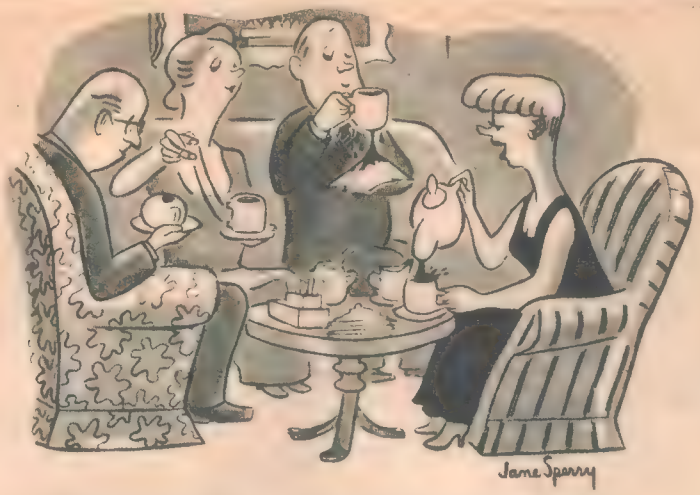
by ROFFE THOMPSON



"I've been taking this wonderful evening course in pottery. Of course, I still have lots to learn"

door open and Mevrou's quick, light step coming, she jumped up.

"Meneer says Piet must be told everything. It does not seem likely that Antjie will tell. We must not ask Antjie, Meneer says. Even if she does speak it might be all lies. Then, when you have told Piet and he . . . if he is satisfied and still wants to get married soon, and if these new laws are really so strict, then we will talk to Piet and suggest to him to try for a job in Rhodesia, or even Angola. Meneer will help him. Don't cry. Later you may even come back to this country. Don't cry, child. . . ."

Mevrou took the snapshot from Lettie's hand and sat there, looking at it—a nice, wholesome, merry peasant lad, this Piet.

She put it down.

"Listen," she said. "Listen. That is what Meneer says. But *I* say: let us go to Oude-Kraal and try to speak to Antjie. We can go tonight. Now. Meneer has a meeting tonight and will not be home before eleven."

So that night they walked across the valley. The moon was so bright that they did not need their torches. Lettie smelt the wood smoke and the goat kraal as they went up to the house and felt her limbs move heavily as in a dream.

Mevrou knocked on the door. "Antjie! Antjie! Come out please. This is Mevrou Wennig. Come outside, Antjie."

The top part of the door creaked and swung open and there was her gaunt figure outlined against the candlelight.

"Come outside, we must speak to you."

Silently, Antjie opened the lower door and came towards them. Lettie saw the wisps of unkempt hair, the face with black, hollow shadows like a death mask. Was that the same old dress? The tattered skirt still swept the ground.

"Come here," said Mevrou, speaking softly now. "Look here. This is your child that I took, Lettie."

"Yes." The same hoarse voice. "Yes, Lettie. She is pretty." And a faint pride showed in her toothless smile.

"Listen to me, Antjie," said Mevrou—and a faraway echo from the past came back to Lettie. "This child is in great trouble and you can help her. The Government wants to know who her real father was. She must know the truth, otherwise there will be much trouble for her. Who was her father? Tell us the truth. Do you understand me?"

Antjie stood motionless as a wild animal in the shade-pattern of the leaves and branches of the old mulberry tree. Lettie could just see the gleam in the black hollows of her eyes as she looked from one to the other, warily.

"You must speak," said Mevrou softly and urgently. "Your child here is very sad; she cannot get married until she knows that she had a white father."

A silly, pleased laugh came from the figure under the tree. "Ach, marry—she wants to marry. . . ."

"Yes, but. . . . Look, where was Lettie born?"

"The other side of the mountain. At the Mission."

Oh, my God, if Piet knew of this. This mindless woman, this smell of goat and sweat. . . .

"Why was Lettie not born here like your younger children?"

"I was given money to go away. And I was to have left her there." She spoke slowly and reluctantly. "But then, when I had her, I did not leave her there. I brought her back and came here with Hendrik."

They waited. These were many words for Antjie. "I was warned that if I tell I shall be killed."

Lettie gripped Mevrou's arm, and held her breath.

"I will see to it that you are not killed, Antjie," said Mevrou urgently. "No one will kill a poor old woman like you now, for that. After all, it is twenty-three years ago. You must speak now and help Lettie. Her heart is very sore. I will see to it that you are not killed."

There was a sudden cackle and the shadowy figure moved abruptly forward. "*You*—you will be the first one to kill me if I tell. . . ."

"Oh, heavens, Mevrou, let us go," said Lettie. "She is mad. Let us go, quickly." She pulled at Mevrou's arm.

"Mad I am, yes," said Antjie in a hoarse whisper, moving towards the house. "Mad. But I remember things. I remember. Mevrou will also remember that year when she went away for many months. I did the washing then, at the house. I was younger then."

She walked into the house, closed the lower door, and stood looking at them.

"I was pretty, too, those days."

The top door closed and there was no sound any more from the ruined house.

THE END

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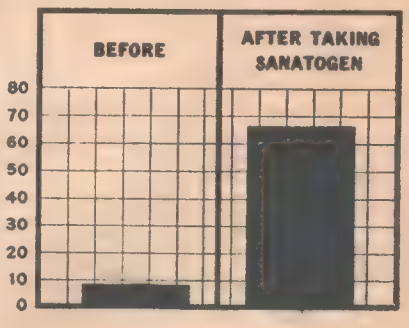

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LIEUTENANT HORNBLOWER

Continued from page 24

rode her three prizes. All four ships were jammed with prisoners, and sails were ready to loose the moment the *Renown* should give the signal.

"The boat's well clear now," said Bush. "I wonder—ah!" The fort on the crest had burst into a great fountain of smoke, within which could be made out flying fragments of masonry. A moment later came the crash of the explosion. Two tons of gunpowder, ignited by the slow match left burning by the demolition party, did the work. The insurgents, when they came to take over the place, would have no means to re-establish the defences of the bay.

"It looks as if the damage is complete enough, sir," said Bush.

"Yes," said Buckland, his eye to his telescope observing the ruins as they began to show through the smoke and dust. "We'll get under way as soon as the boat's hoisted in, if you please."

"Aye, aye, sir," said Bush.

As the *Renown* pulled away from the scene of her victory, somebody forward began to cheer, and in a moment the entire crew was yelling lustily. The prizes were getting under way at the same time, and the prize crews on board echoed the cheering. Bush's telescope could pick out Hornblower on the deck of *La Gaditana*, the big ship-rigged prize, waving his hat to the *Renown*.

"I'll see that everything is secure below, sir," Bush said to Buckland.

There were marine sentries beside the midshipmen's berth, bayonets fixed and muskets loaded. From within, as Bush listened, there was a wild babble of voices. Fifty women were cramped into that space, and almost as many children. That was bad, but it was necessary to confine them while the ship got under way. Later on they could be allowed on deck, in batches perhaps, for air and exercise.

The hatchways in the lower gundeck were closed by gratings, and every hatchway was guarded by a sentry. Up through the gratings rose the smell of humanity; there were four hundred Spanish soldiers confined down there in conditions not much better than prevailed in a slave ship. It was only since dawn that they had been down there, and already there was this stench.

For the men, as for the women, there would have to be arrangements made to allow them to take the air in batches. It meant endless trouble and precaution. Bush had already gone to considerable trouble to organize a system by which the prisoners should be supplied with food and drink. But every water butt was full, two boatloads of yams had been brought on board from the shore, and, given the steady breeze that could be expected, the run to Kingston would be completed in less than a week. Then their troubles would be ended and the prisoners handed over to the military authorities—probably the prisoners would be as relieved as Bush would be.

On deck again, Bush looked over at the green hills of Santo Domingo out on the starboard beam as, close hauled, the *Renown* coasted along them; on that side, too, under her lee as his orders had dictated, Hornblower had the three prizes under easy sail. Even with this brisk seven-knot breeze blowing and the *Renown* with all sail set, those three vessels had the heels of her if they cared to show them; privateers depended both for catching their prey and evading their enemies on the ability to work fast to windward, and Hornblower could soon have left the *Renown* far behind if he were not under orders to keep within sight and to leeward so that the *Renown* could run down to him and protect him if an enemy should appear. The prize crews were small enough in all conscience, and, just as in the *Renown*, Hornblower had all the prisoners he could guard battened down below.

Bush touched his hat to Buckland as the latter came on to the quarterdeck. "I'll start bringing the prisoners up if I may, sir," he said.

"Do as you think proper, if you please, Mr. Bush."

The quarterdeck for the women, the main-deck for the men. It was hard to make them understand that they had to take turns; those of the women who were brought on deck seemed to fancy that they were going to be permanently separated from those kept below, and there was lamentation and expostulation which accorded ill with the dignified routine which should be observed on the quarterdeck of a ship of the line. And the children knew no discipline whatever, and ran shrieking about in all directions while harassed seamen tried to bring them back to their mothers. And other seamen had to be detailed to bring the prisoners their food and water; Bush, tackling each aggravating problem as it arose, began to think that life as first lieutenant in a ship of the line (which he had once believed to be a paradise too wonderful for him to aspire to) was not worth the living.

There were thirty officers crammed into the steerage; they were almost as much trouble to Bush as all the other prisoners combined, for they took the air on the poop, from which point of vantage they endeavoured to hold conversations with their wives on the quarterdeck, while they had to be fed from the wardroom stores, which were rapidly depleted by the large Spanish appetites.

Bush found himself looking forward more and more eagerly to their arrival at Kingston, and he had neither time nor inclination to brood over what might be their reception there, which was probably just as well, for while he could hope for commendation for the part he had played in the attack on Santo Domingo, he could also fear the result of an inquiry into the circumstances which had deprived Captain Sawyer of his command.

Day by day the wind held fair; day by day the *Renown* surged along over the blue Caribbean with the prizes to leeward on the port bow.

The prisoners, even the women, began to recover from their seasickness, and feeding them and guarding them became more and more matters of routine making less demand on everyone. In the daytime the sun blazed down upon the ship, save for the brief intervals when sharp rainstorms blotted out sun and sea; at night the ship rose and swooped with the following sea under a canopy of stars.

It was a dark, lovely night when Bush completed his evening rounds and went in to report to Buckland. The sentries were posted; the watch below was asleep with all lights out; the watch on deck had taken in the royals as a precaution against a rain

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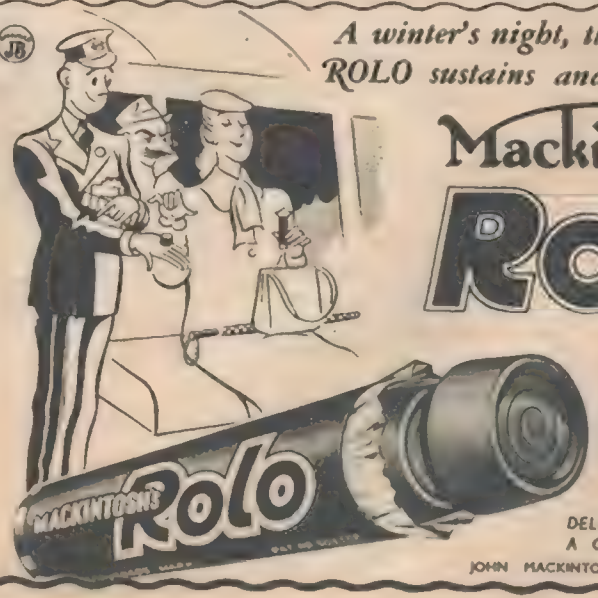

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squall striking the ship without warning in the darkness; the course was east-by-north, and Mr. Carberry had the watch, and the convoy was in sight a mile on the port bow. The guard over the captain in his cabin was at his post. All this Bush recounted to Buckland in the time-honoured fashion of the Navy, and Buckland listened to it with the Navy's time-honoured patience.

"Thank you, Mr. Bush."

"Thank you, sir. Good night, sir."

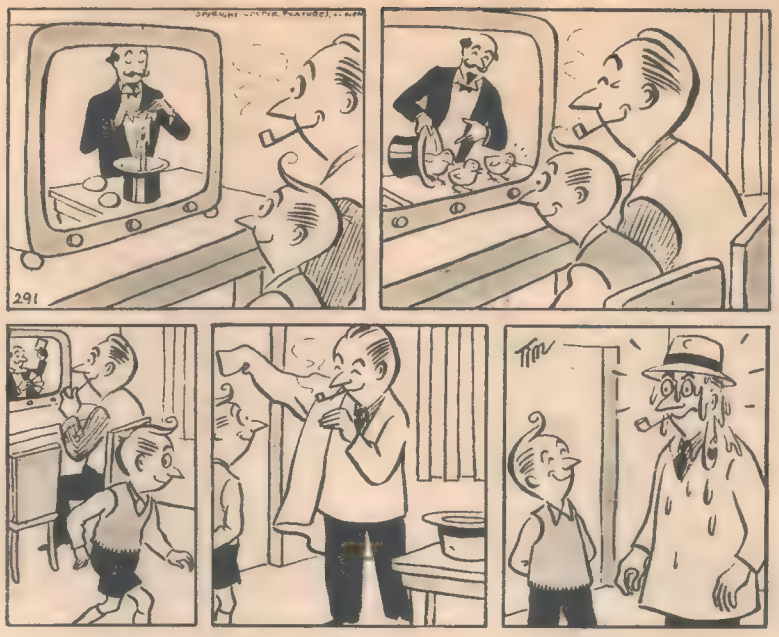
"Good night, Mr. Bush."

Bush's cabin opened on the half-deck; it was hot and stuffy with the heat of the tropics, but Bush did not care. He had six clear hours in which to sleep, seeing that he was going to take the morning watch, and he was not the man to waste any of that. He threw off his outer clothes, and, standing in his shirt, he cast a final look round his cabin before putting out the light. Shoes and trousers were on the sea chest ready to be put on at a moment's notice in the event of an emergency. Sword and pistols were in their beckets against the bulkhead. All was well. The messenger who would come to call him would bring a light, so, using his hand to deflect his breath, he blew out the light. Then he dropped upon the cot, lying on his back with his arms and legs spread wide so as to allow the sweat every chance to evaporate, and he closed his eyes. Thanks to his blessed stolidity of temperament, he was soon asleep.

At midnight he awoke long enough to hear the watch called, and to tell himself blissfully that there was no need to rouse himself.

LATER he awoke again, and looked up into the darkness with uncomprehending eyes as his ears told him all was not well. There were loud cries, there was a rush of feet overhead. Perhaps a fluky rain squall had taken the ship aback. But these were the wrong noises. Were some of them cries of pain? Was that the scream of a woman? Were those infernal women squabbling with each other again? Now there was another rush of feet, and wild shouting, which brought Bush off his cot in a flash. He tore open his cabin door, and as he did so he heard the bang of a musket which left him in no doubt as to what was happening. He turned back and grabbed for sword and pistol, and by the time he was outside his cabin door again, the ship was full of a yelling tumult. It was as if the hatchways were the entrances to

OH, JOHNNY! *by TIM*



Hell, and pouring up through them were the infernal powers, screaming with triumph in the dimly lit recesses of the ship.

As he emerged, the sentry under the lantern fired his musket, lantern and musket flash illuminating a wave of humanity pouring upon the sentry and instantly submerging him; Bush caught a glimpse of a woman leading the wave, a handsome mulatto woman, wife of one of the privateer officers, now screaming with open mouth and staring eyes as she led the rush. Bush levelled his pistol and fired, but they were up to him in an instant.

He backed into his narrow doorway. Hands grabbed his sword-blade, and he tore it through their grip; he struck wildly with his empty pistol, he kicked out with his bare feet to free himself from the hands that grabbed at him. Thrusting overhand with his sword, he stabbed again and again into the mass of bodies pressing against him. Twice his head struck against the deck beams above, but he did not feel the blows. Then the flood had washed past him. There were shouts and screams and blows farther along, but he himself had been passed by, save by the groaning men who wallowed at his feet—his bare feet, slipping in the hot blood that poured over them.

His first thought was for Buckland, but a single glance aft assured him that by himself he stood no chance of being of any aid to him, and in that case his post was on the quarterdeck and he ran out, sword in hand, to make his way there.

AT the foot of the companion ladder there was another whirl of yelling Spaniards; above there were shouts and cries as the afterguard fought it out. Forward there was other fighting going on; the stars were shining on white-shirted groups that fought and struggled with savage desperation.

Bush, unknown to himself, was yelling with the rest. A band of men turned upon him as he approached, and he felt the heavy blow of a belaying-pin against his sword blade. But Bush, inflamed with fighting madness, was an enemy to be feared; his immense strength was allied to a lightfooted quickness. He struck and parried, leaping over the encumbered deck. He knew nothing, and during those mad minutes, he thought of nothing save to fight against these enemies, to reconquer the ship by the strength of his single arm. Then he regained some of his sanity at the moment when he struck down one of the group against whom he was fighting. He must rally the crew, set an example. He raised his voice in a bellow.

"Renowns! Renowns! Here, Renowns! Come on!"

There was a fresh swirl in the mad confusion on the main-deck. There was a searing pain across his shoulder - blade; instinctively, he turned and his left hand seized a throat and he had a moment in which to brace himself and exert all his strength, with a wrench and a heave flinging the man on to the deck.

"Renowns!" he yelled again. There was a rush of feet as a body of men rallied round him. "Come on!"

But the charge that he led was met by a wall of men advancing forward against him from aft. Bush and his little group were swept back, across the deck, jammed against the bulwarks. Somebody shouted something in Spanish in front of him, and there was an eddy in the ring; then a musket flashed and banged. The flash lit up the swarthy faces that ringed them round, lit up the bayonet on the muzzle of the musket, and the man beside Bush gave a sharp cry and fell to the deck; Bush could feel him flapping and struggling against his feet. Someone at least had a fire-arm—taken from an arms rack or from a marine—and had managed to reload it. They would be shot to pieces where they stood, if they were to stand.

"Come on!" yelled Bush again, and sprang forward.

But the disheartened little group behind him did not stir, and Bush gave back from the rigid ring. Another musket flashed and banged, and another man fell. Someone raised his voice and called to them in Spanish.

Bush could not understand the words, but he could guess it was a demand for surrender.

"I'll see you damned first," he said. He was almost weeping with rage. The thought of his magnificent ship falling into alien hands was appalling now that the realization of the possibility arose in his mind. A ship of the line captured and carried off into some Cuban port—what would England say? What would the Navy say? He did not want to live to find out. He was a desperate man who wanted to die.

This time it was with no intelligible appeal to his men that he sprang forward, but with a wild animal cry; he was insane with fury, a fighting lunatic and with a lunatic's strength. He burst through the ring of his enemies, slashing and smiting, but he was the only one who succeeded; he was out on to the clear deck while the struggle went on behind him.

To be continued next week

JOHNNIE POOTHERS

Continued from page 16

tea, always in strict rotation, the will hovered over them all. There were a few nondescript cousins; an unmarried nephew who one day spilled his tea all over Johnnie Poothers and, rightly abandoning hope, went to sea; two middle-aged nephews; three nieces, two of them unmarried and already with a look in their eyes of dedication to good works in the years before them; and her one married niece, Christine Prosser.

The cousins and the unmarried nieces might have been, to judge by their behaviour at Mrs. Tremlett's tea parties, as worshipful of cats as the ancient Egyptians. No sooner were they over Mrs. Tremlett's threshold than their ecstatic cries began. They could hardly wait to ask how dear Johnnie was. On every visit they clamorously admired his beauty, his elegance, his good manners, his amber eyes and affectionate nature.

Their way of demonstrating this last virtue was simple. Cousins, nephews, nieces all made a beeline for Johnnie Poothers; chirruped endearments at him, stroked him vigorously, picked him up at the first indulgent nod from their hostess, and smothered him with caresses.

There was one exception: Mrs. Tremlett's niece Christine, who had been married for two years to a telephone engineer named Sidney Prosser. Mr. Prosser always came with his wife to tea and claimed to be a great lover of cats.

Possibly he stressed this—and who can blame him?—because he knew, even if Mrs. Tremlett did not, that his wife Christine simply couldn't bear them.

However, it is remarkable what human beings are capable of when sustained by good financial prospects, and, luckily for Mrs. Prosser, she was never obliged to approach Johnnie Poothers as he lay smugly on his embroidered cushion. Others tendered their homage; but in the case of Mrs. Prosser it was Johnnie Poothers who always took the initiative. As soon as Mrs. Prosser was seated, Johnnie rose, stretched himself luxuriously, and made straight for her lap, on which he settled down with every sign of contentment.

Poor Mrs. Prosser! To her credit it must be recorded that she did not flinch. With so much at stake—and if her husband was right, Mrs. Tremlett was worth every penny of fifty thousand pounds—she smiled at the purring cat and even stroked him gently between his ears.

"It's a funny thing," said Mrs. Tremlett one Saturday, "but darling Johnnie never goes to anyone else like that. They always *know*."

Mrs. Prosser lowered her head modestly or perhaps to hide her anguish, for Johnnie Poothers was responding to her timid stroking by rhythmically thrusting his claws in and out of her best tweed skirt.

"Yes," Mrs. Tremlett was saying, "cats can always tell. Your cousin Phyllis, for instance. She's far too rough with poor Johnnie. He's not a dog." She pronounced the word "dog" as only an ardent cat lover can. "I dread to think what will happen to him when I'm gone."

Mr. Prosser laughed decorously. "That won't be for many years, Mrs. Tremlett."

"It's my heart. At my age I have to be prepared, don't I, Johnnie?"

Johnnie Poothers languidly opened one eye and shut it again.

"Another cup of tea, Christine?" With her hand on the silver teapot, Mrs. Tremlett glanced round the room. "Yes, of all my treasures, Johnnie Poothers is the most precious." She sighed. "It's a comfort to know that I'm not the only one who loves cats."

On their way home, Mr. Prosser

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congratulated his wife. "It's in the bag," he said. "You see."

"Don't be such a fool, Sidney. She'll outlive all of us. There's nothing wrong with her. Only that awful cat. I don't know how I put up with it."

"I could have gone to the dogs this afternoon," said Mr. Prosser. "And last Saturday, too."

"You know we can't afford *that*," said his wife, sharply.

"All the more reason for keeping in with the old girl. You heard what she said today about your cousin Phyllis."

"You make me tired," said Mrs. Prosser. "Aunt T. is so potty she'll go and leave all her money to a cats' home."

Which is precisely what Mrs. Tremlett did. She died six months after Mrs. Prosser's careless prediction, leaving all she possessed to a cats' home in south-west London: with the exception of fifty pounds, a chair, an embroidered cushion and Johnnie Poothers as a bequest to her dear niece Christine Prosser. The will contained a clause which expressed the pious hope that Johnnie Poothers would be cherished for the remainder of his days.

WHEN Mrs. Prosser recovered from the shock, she demanded an interview with her aunt's solicitor. Two things had to be cleared up. First, there was the question of Mrs. Tremlett's state of mind.

The lawyer took off his glasses and polished them while he talked.

"I do not believe," he said, "that there can be any doubt whatever about my client's sanity. This will merely repeated in slightly different form the good lady's intention of many years' standing."

"It's—it's outrageous," said Mr. Prosser. "We'll fight it."

"You should no doubt consult your own solicitor," said the lawyer, replacing his glasses and looking without affection at Mr. Prosser. "But it is perhaps relevant to point out that Mrs. Prosser is not the next of kin. Let me see, it's——"

"Oh, it doesn't matter," said Mrs. Prosser. "The other thing we want to know is about this cat. I don't like cats and I particularly don't want this one."

"You can, of course, renounce the legacy," said the lawyer.

"Only the cat," said Mr. Prosser. "We want the fifty quid."

"I am afraid that is not possible. The legacy can only be renounced as a whole. You see, the wording of the clause——"

Mr. Prosser got up and pushed his wife towards the door. "O.K.," he said. "We'll have the perishing cat."

* * *

"It's no good," said Mrs. Prosser. "If that cat stays in this house I——" She checked herself. Sidney was in such a bad temper today that he was capable of anything. She couldn't afford to walk out of the house, or even threaten to.

As if he had read her thoughts, Mr. Prosser got up from the table, pushed Johnnie Poothers off his cushion, and made for the door.

"I'm off," he said. He paused on the threshold. "One good thing. I don't have to waste any more Saturday afternoons kow-towing to your silly old aunt."

"You're not going to the dog races, now—in the middle of the week?"

But Mr. Prosser had gone. His wife sighed and closed her eyes, as if in silent prayer. Johnnie Poothers, timing it nicely, jumped neatly into her lap. It was then that Mrs. Prosser made up her mind.

She jumped up, shook the clinging Johnnie Poothers violently away from her and seized the nearest movable object, which was the hated embroidered cushion. Using this as an Amazon might have manipulated her shield, Mrs. Prosser advanced stealthily towards the fireplace. Poker in hand, she turned on Johnnie Poothers.

Ten years of soft living had not atrophied Johnnie's instinct for self-preservation. One glance at the uplifted poker was enough. Like a streak of black-and-white lightning, Johnnie Poothers was through the door and up the stairs.

Mrs. Prosser followed grimly. It was not difficult to dislodge him from under beds, although Mrs. Prosser laddered her only good pair of nylons in the process. As the chase continued from one room to another upstairs and downstairs, all the casualties were at Mrs. Prosser's expense.

One of a pair of Chinese vases was knocked from the bedroom mantelpiece and broke into fragments (one of which was destined to gash Mrs. Prosser's knee when she cleaned up the next day); all that was left of the day's milk cascaded over the kitchen table; she caught the sleeve of her silk blouse on a nail near the back door.

The first impetus of her rage spent, Mrs. Prosser resorted to strategy. From the top of the stairs, she caught a glimpse of Johnnie doubling back into the sitting-room. She crept down the stairs, stepped boldly inside the room and slammed the door behind her.

Johnnie Poothers was cornered. He crouched down, looking wildly round the disordered room. Mrs. Prosser advanced carefully towards him, cushion thrust forward and poker upright.

"Got you!" she cried, as she lunged heavily forward.

At the sound of her voice, distorted by anger and loss of wind, Johnnie sprang desperately for safety. In that split second, he saw a chance of escape. Before Mrs. Prosser could bring down her arm, he was underneath it, into the fireplace, and up the chimney.

Almost at once, the room was

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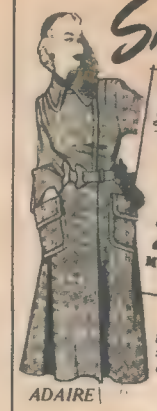

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The new Star craftsman-built, precision razor. Micrometer-tested (to 1/10,000th of an inch) to set blade at perfect shaving angle. Balanced, non-slip, handle. Heavily chromium plated. Complete with 5 Star blades in handsome case.

STAR DOUBLE EDGE BLADES

An Ever-Ready Razor Product. 5 for 1/- everywhere!

thick with falling soot. Mrs. Prosser trod on the edge of the table cloth, tried to recover her balance and pulled everything on to the carpet, now scarcely visible under the haze of soot. She began to cry hysterically. She had been on to Sidney for months about having the chimney swept.

As she dropped the poker, Johnnie Poothers descended from the chimney in a final avalanche of soot. Not one white patch of his fur was visible as he leapt frantically towards his last remaining hope of safety. This was a patch of light in the darkened room which he may or may not have recognized. Mrs. Prosser knew it was the window as Johnnie Poothers crashed through the glass into the garden.

Mrs. Prosser used some most unladylike words as she set about clearing up the mess. It was too late to go out and buy more milk for tea by the time she had finished, and there was no sign of Sidney. Not that she could expect sympathy from anyone so inconsiderate and always ready to blame her, whatever happened.

"It's *not* my fault," she told herself, as she wearily dabbed damp cotton-wool over her face and hair to remove the penetrating soot. "I hate cats. Horrible creatures! I never wanted the wretched money."

This, of course, was quite untrue, and Mrs. Prosser knew it, and as she spoke the words to the mirror, it revealed on her face a sudden expression of great misgiving. She had in that moment remembered that Sidney still had the cheque for fifty pounds in his possession. It was just like him to be too late, or so he had said, to pay it into the bank on a Saturday.

With fear gnawing at her, Mrs. Prosser peeled the potatoes for supper. Perhaps because her thoughts were elsewhere, the knife slipped and she cut her finger. Having bandaged it with difficulty, she decided that she needed a restorative: only to find that the cupboard which contained the Prossers' two bottles, one of port and one of brandy, was locked. Sidney again, thought Mrs. Prosser bitterly.

She did not enjoy her solitary meal. There was still one room to be cleaned, for the prints of Johnnie Poothers's paws still remained to mark his panic-stricken passage through the bathroom. Sidney can do it in the morning, she decided, as she took the bucket upstairs.

It was half past nine when fumbling sounds outside proclaimed the return home of Mr. Prosser. One glance was enough for Mrs. Prosser.

"You're drunk," she said.

"Consolation," said Mr. Prosser, sitting down suddenly. "Losht it all—every penny. Jusht had 'nough left. Drown my sorrows. Never'n all my life had such shockin' luck."

"Do you mean to tell me," said Mrs. Prosser slowly and distinctly, "that you cashed that cheque?"

"I do," said Mr. Prosser, trying, and failing, to sit up with dignity. "We might have made a packet, a real packet." He pointed a wavering finger at her. "All the favourites were turning up. I put the lot on the favourite in the last race. Guesh what won it—an outsider called Darling Johnnie!"

Mr. Prosser closed his eyes and snored. Mrs. Prosser, beyond words, went upstairs. She leaned out of the bedroom window, panting. In the moonlight there was something

"These dreams in which you foresee next week's football results. Could you tell me more, Mr. Rigby?"

moving below: it was Johnnie Poothers. He looked up appealingly at the window, as if to say: "Let bygones be bygones."

Mrs. Prosser remembered the bucket in the bathroom. Johnnie Poothers mewed plaintively as she tilted the bucketful of water over the window sill. For an instant he seemed stunned as the water drenched him. Then he fled, like a glistening black arrow, into the shadows of the garden.

To give Mr. Prosser his due, he was not one to bear malice, even after a night spent in an uncomfortable armchair with all his clothes on. He said nothing about the breakages, even though his wife bitterly catalogued them as if he were personally responsible. As for Mrs. Prosser's repeated denunciation of his criminal folly in flinging away the precious fifty pounds, he defended himself by reiterating, tersely but more coherently, that it was sheer bad luck. When Mrs. Prosser vehemently disputed this, he shut himself up in the bathroom and emerged only when it was time to go to work.

When Mr. Prosser returned an hour earlier than usual, his wife at once sensed that something was wrong.

"Got the sack," said Mr. Prosser. "And don't you start, because I'm going out."

"To drown your sorrows, I suppose. Any decent husband would be looking through the advertisements for another job. You don't care what becomes of me. You don't even tell me why you got the sack, though I can't say I'm surprised. Oh, no, you don't tell me anything."

Mr. Prosser glared at her. "It's just bad luck," he said.

"Bad luck?" she said. "There's no such thing as bad luck."

But Mrs. Prosser was destined to change her mind about this.

If there was one thing she valued, it was the garnet-and-pearl brooch which had been a twenty-first birthday present from her sister who had died of consumption. It might have been in the soot-stained blouse which she had taken to the cleaners that morning, or it might have dropped out of her string bag on the way; but it was never seen again. Her best teapot broke against the tap when she was washing up; the roof over the bedroom sprang a leak; a loose stair rod sent her sprawling downstairs, so that she had to hobble about on a twisted ankle.

All Sidney's efforts to find another job were unsuccessful. He pawned his watch and cuff-links, but his hopes

"I Haven't Made The Beds Yet!"

When Doris called for me to go shopping, I was nowhere near ready. I'd woken up with a nasty headache, and was feeling so rotten I'd hardly started my housework.

"Never mind, dear," said Doris. "Try a couple of my 'YEAST-VITE' Tablets. They'll soon make you feel better."

Doris was an angel. While I took the "YEAST-VITE" Tablets she started on my washing-up.

Before she'd
shoppi

"YEAST-VITE"
the tonic Vitar
NERVE and
and brighter,

YEAST-VITE

"Pick-Me-Up" Tablets. Price 1/8 and 4/-.

Relieves Your Pain & Bucks You Up

"YEAST-VITE" is a registered Trade Mark.

HE USED HIS EYES—WON FIRST PRIZE!

WHAT youngsters mean in one's home, the cost of living, the Royal couple's Canadian visit—such were the simple themes inspiring some recent First Prize *Bullets*. One reader, Mr. H. Wilson, Wellfield House West, Todmorden, drew on facts headlined in every newspaper to write his telling *Bullet*: TRIUMPH OF NATIONALISM—FLAG OVER RUSTING REFINERY! It brought him £500 plus "Warmth and Comfort" Award—see picture.

Your home, your problems, your newspaper can supply material for *this week's* £500 *Bullet*. Besides this fortune, there is another big instalment of JOHN BULL'S 1,000 Christmas feasts to be won, as well as hundreds of other prizes. Carve out some good *Bullets* this evening and you may be carving a JOHN BULL turkey on Christmas Day!

Here is £500 winner Wilson, selecting his "Warmth and Comfort" Award. "I wouldn't be without my helpful *Bulletin*," he told *John Bull*. Use Application Coupon below to secure, free and post-free, the special *Bulletin* marking *Bullets* giant Christmas Offer.

(*Continued from next column*)

For ten winners of £2 10s. see "*Bullets*" *Bulletin*.

100 Festival Crowns and 2,000 "Good Shot" Awards have also been posted.

"Bullets" Winners 1,804

FIRST PRIZE, £750 plus Celebration Weekend, also Television Bonus: Mrs. G. M. Eite, 28 Isandula Road, Basford, Nottingham:

HIS MAJESTY—HOSPITAL THOUGHT *Me*, APPARENTLY!

£50 plus Celebration Weekend: R. E. Pratt, 54 Lavington Road, Ealing, W.13: TO PAY THE BILL—FOR *World's* "FIREWORKS," SONNY?

£25 plus Celebration Weekend: W. J. Gaston, 382 Glasgow Road, Clydebank: ONE COMFORT—GRANDPA'S HANDLED SUDAN BEFORE!

OTHER AWARDS: £10: W. H. Scott, 54 Cecil Road, Rochester: JUDGING BY THE RESULTS—WE'RE WORLD'S CHAMPION "*Football*"! £9: A. F. Davies, 20 Esher Grove, Mapperley Park, Nottingham: HIS MAJESTY—CONVALESCING—WITH STATE PAPERS? £8: W. Wright, 39 Church Lane, Lower Edge, Elland, Yorks: SERVING OTHERS—SHOULDN'T INCLUDE VICARAGE CHORES. £7: A. T. Ewart, 9 Wilcott Drive, Sale, Manchester: WON'T GO FAR—DAD—ONLY *Sixpenny* ROCKET! £6: J. W. Booth, 138 Brookhill Street, Stapleford, Notts: A WOMAN'S WORLD—I FILL, IF ILL. £5: R. J. Grogan, 29 Charlesbury Avenue, Gosport: MOSSADEQ'S NATIONALISTS—DEMANDING *Cats* RETURNED NEXT? £5: Mrs. L. Wood, 10 High Street, Newport Pagnell, Bucks: TIME, THE TYRANT—"RULING" INDUSTRY, "BANISHING" CRAFTSMAN?

(*Continued in previous column*)

Another Instalment of "Bullets"

1,000 XMAS FEASTS

£500 FIRST PRIZE

Winner will be privileged to name a local hospital to receive 12-lb. iced Christmas Cake

£50, £25, £20, £15, £10, £9, £8, £7, £6, 5 of £5, 5 of £2.10s.

ALL ABOVE PRIZES PLUS

TURKEY HAMPERS

YOUR £4 CHRISTMAS HAMPER contains fine 10-lb. Turkey, Christmas Pudding and Christmas Fruit Cake.

100 SURREY FOWLS

—each a selected 5/6-lb. bird

2,000 "GOOD SHOT" PRIZES

XMAS CAKE BONUSES

A delicious Christmas Cake accompanies each Surrey Fowl prize won with *Bullet* which was one of four or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "EXAMPLES"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Belongs To Britain
Unless We Go To It
Rule Of Law
Helps The Government
The Soviet Spider
Golden Age
If They're Wise
Health Is Wealth, So
Youth Thinks
Looks Quite Christmasy
Stirring
When He Gets Home
Patience Rewarded
Might Be A Good Idea
Red-hot
Dad's Dividend
The Last Laugh
With Ease
Really Serious
Counsel For The Defence

Incomplete "Examples"
—see instructions

.....Round The Corner
Dropped The.....
Leave.....Alone And
Man In A.....
Saw.....Coming
.....Of The Village

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s, if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated Dec. 8, and in JOHN BULL, dated Dec. 15, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "Combined," top left-hand corner.

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 1,809 (or Xword 761) "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

INCREASED FEASTS

in next week's JOHN BULL!

XMAS FOWLS and PUDDINGS for XWORDS!

This Way To Win

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one*, *two* or *three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues XWORD 761

1. Football enthusiasts realize it's not so very easy to forecast these
3. Men who do this know to their cost what slips are
7. One rarely makes sleep impossible
8. It is one of Uno's tasks to deal with any clash of these
9. One might think that many a comedian made his own
11. General might be lost without one
12. Should you hire a badly leaking boat, it will make you do this

Down Clues

1. Helps captain of football team quite a lot
2. It's quite common for valuable information to be given away by one
3. Man is occasionally pulled up abruptly by one when almost within reach of goal
4. It may be considered irresponsible for one to strike, without a sound reason
5. These need some sort of cover
6. Memory of this may well linger if one is cut
7. It's very jolly when these show a fellow he's appreciated
10. Very often doesn't come just when you want it

£100 1ST PRIZE CASH PLUS XMAS DINNER SURPRISE

for £100 winner or each sharer

AWARDS VALUE £25

amongst 1st Runners-up and up to

100 XMAS FOWLS

AND

100 PLUM PUDDINGS

(Fowl and Pudding with every 1st Runners-up Award value 5s. or over)

UP TO 500 "SIGNPOST" PRIZES —one for each 2nd Runner-up

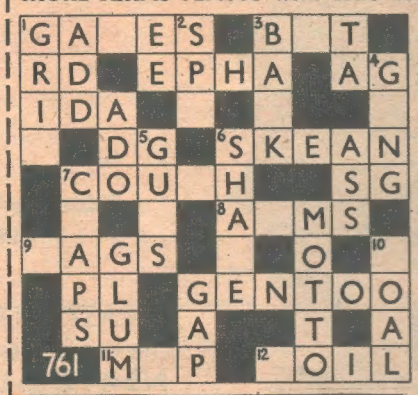
XWORD 756 RESULT

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 3, Drams. 6, Wrack. 7, Boot. 10, Age. 13, Oar. 14, Bar. 15, Ninny. DOWN: 1, Dross. 2, Ices. 4, Rubber. 5, Suet. 8, Aits. 9, Sitter. 11, Cully. 12, Darn.

TWO £100 SHARERS: Miss A. Bellsham, 24 Mary MacArthur House, "Greenways," Roman Road, London, E.2; H. Stanley, 47 Rennets Wood Road, London, S.E.9.

Awards value £25 for 1st Runners-up shared by 61 entrants. Useful "Signpost" Prizes awarded to 2nd Runners-up.

MORE XMAS FEASTS with THIS WEEK'S PRIZES



CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
No.		2s.

(*Total fee shown includes entry on Square*)

Puzzle and form strictly copyright **761** Closing Postmark MON., NOV. 19

I enclose P.O. value..... No.....

Signed .....

Address .....

.....

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.). Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.) and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated Dec. 1.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.

POST THIS LABEL for BIG CHRISTMAS NEWS

Make November 29 a day to watch for the postman. Post JOHN BULL this Label and November 29 will bring you "*Bullets*" *Bulletin* dated Dec. 1, containing full details of one of this year's biggest prize-lists — "*Bullets*" Giant Christmas Offer!

FREE

THIS WEEK ONLY

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

.....

622

OF raising the wind on the dog-track were soon shattered. He caught his right hand in the front garden gate and had to have four stitches put in it.

It was when Mrs. Prosser was gloomily cutting up the food on his plate that the truth dawned on him.

"That cat," he said. "That Johnnie Poothers. Ever since you chased that perishing cat out of the house. . . ."

Mrs. Prosser stared at him, knife and fork in mid-air, silenced for once.

"Nothing but bad luck since then," he cried. "We've got to find that cat."

"No need to shout," said his wife, recovering herself. But she did not argue. It was, in fact, she who thought of offering a reward in the local paper for the return of a black-and-white cat answering to the name of Johnnie Poothers.

The advertisement (three insertions) appeared, but as the days went by without a reply, the Prossers became more and more obsessed with the idea that only the return of Johnnie Poothers could put things right. For the next few days they inquired at all the shops, offered rewards to passing children and had handbills printed and stuck up all over the neighbourhood. They inquired at all the police stations within a radius of five miles. They patrolled the streets together, united by their misfortune.

ONE evening, Mr. Prosser put his hand on his wife's arm as they were passing the Glove and Feathers and raised an inviting eyebrow.

Mrs. Prosser shivered. "I think I will," she said. "Just this once."

Mr. Prosser was just about to open the door when his wife noticed the words "Public Bar." She shivered again, but this time it was a shiver of distaste. "I couldn't possibly go in there, Sidney," she said.

"Well, let's find the saloon bar." A few minutes later, Mrs. Prosser was sipping a glass of ruby port in the sombre elegance of the saloon bar round the corner.

She looked round her. The public bar was separated from them by a wood-and-glass partition, through which Mrs. Prosser could hear the noise of voices and laughter. She turned to her husband.

"I'm glad we didn't go in there," she said. "It's so much nicer in here. more refined."

But Mrs. Prosser, had she known it, would have had more satisfaction, at any rate, more relief, in the public bar than any number of ruby ports could have provided in the elegance of the saloon. For the noise she heard was the voice of the landlord, telling an enjoyable story.

"Jumped on this very counter, he did, dripping wet, sat up and begged for a warming drink if ever an animal did."

The oldest inhabitant of the public bar interrupted from his corner. "What about them notices a week or two back offering a quid reward for a missing cat?"

The landlord laughed. "Couldn't have been this cat. Plain as a pikestaff someone had thrown him in the river. Wet and miserable, he was. Looks different now, don't he? Besides, I wouldn't part with this son of a gun for any one pound note. He's worth a lot more than that to me," he added, fondly stroking the handsome black-and-white cat. "He's brought me wonderful good luck."

Johnnie Poothers sleepily opened one eye, stretched and went back to sleep again, purring. THE END

[Every Trade Advertisement Guaranteed]

BEETLE THAT CAN BRING DOWN THE HOUSE

Continued from page 15

that Harris had seen was in a house in the Camberley area. "The beetles had been at it for about fifty years," he says, "and the roof timbers and attics were in a terrible way."

Just what the beetle can do is demonstrated by slight, trim Miss J. M. Taylor, entomologist for two and a half years at Princes Risborough, and now enthusiastic about the work of finding out just what makes the house longhorn thrive.

Her first exhibits are in a big, airy room where what appear to be a dozen or so glass butter dishes cover homely couples of house longhorns. Each couple (consisting of a ferocious-looking inch-long female and a diminutive, bowler hatted-looking male) have built their home on a small block of wood specially split to provide the narrow crevices into which the female likes to lay her eggs.

"The average seems to be about fifty eggs a time," says Miss Taylor, "but there have been cases of as many as 500."

Breeding A Menace

The next stage is the humidity room, where the eggs hatch in about a fortnight and where the larvae really get down to work on the wood-boring job. Here, under varying conditions of heat, light and humidity, they provide clues which should help to check the longhorn.

"Our main trouble is catching them," says Miss Taylor of the beetles in the wood storage "cage," where rows of infested wood are kept. "Some beetles will just fall into a trap placed under a light at night. With the house longhorn we have to come in here every day and catch the number we want."

The infested wood, in which the specimens live until wanted, is sent in from many parts of the country. "And you can see what some of it is like," she says, gently prodding what appears to be a sound piece of wood, then letting her fingers go clean through it to pull back the deceptive outer skin and reveal the hollow, sawdusty interior.

Control Is Costly

"It is essential," says the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, which controls the laboratory, "that any further spread of the insect should be checked. Once the beetle becomes established, control is extremely costly and eradication probably impossible.

"The beetle is somewhat flattened, measuring from one-third to one inch in length and brown or black in colour. The head and first body segment are thickly covered with grey hairs except, upon the first body segment, for a smooth central line on each side of which is a shiny black prominence."

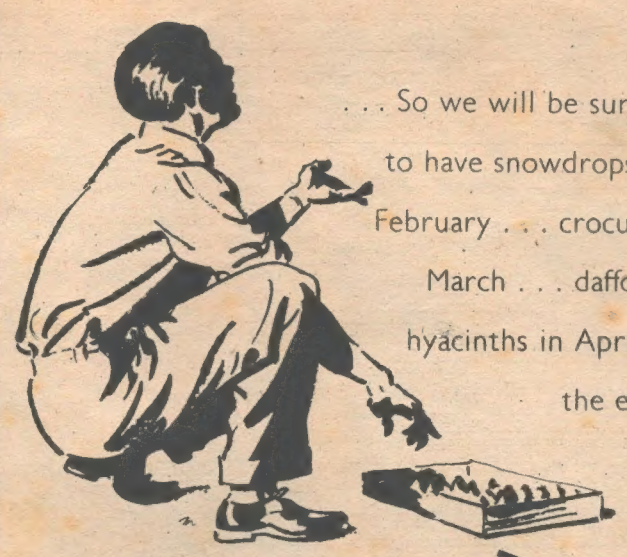
Only seasoned softwoods are attacked, and damage is generally confined to the sapwood. Attack usually starts in the structural timbers of the roof and attic floor, and then works downwards. Removal of the infested wood, fumigation, or application of insecticides can probably deal with the trouble effectively.

"But," say the authorities, "it's going to save you an awful lot of money if you catch the business in its early stages." THE END

FROM MY FAMILY ALBUM

The photograph on page 24 is of Jean Kent when a child.

"Of course they're Dutch bulbs, and now is the time to plant them"



. . . So we will be sure to have snowdrops in February . . . crocuses in March . . . daffodils and hyacinths in April and tulips until the end of May.

Dutch BULBS NOW!

PLANT

Don't Neglect Slipping FALSE TEETH

Do false teeth drop, slip or wobble when you talk, eat, laugh or sneeze? Don't be annoyed and embarrassed by such handicaps. FASTEETH, an alkaline (non-acid) powder to sprinkle on your plates, keeps false teeth more firmly set. Gives confident feeling of security and added comfort. No gummy, gooey, pasty taste or feeling. Get FASTEETH today at Boots, Timothy Whites and Taylors, Woolworth's, or any chemist. Write for a generous free sample of FASTEETH to Dept. 4, Stanning Proprietaries Ltd., 11 Waterloo Place, London, S.W.1, enclosing 2½d. in stamps for postage.

Beware Of NERVOUS INDIGESTION

Indigestion often comes from a nervous system starved of Vitamin B. There is only one way to remedy it. Increase the Vitamin B content of your food.

The simplest way is to take two tablets of Phillips Tonic Yeast with your meals. It is simply pure yeast with all its cells intact and without any drugs or harmful ingredients. Yeast is the richest natural source of all the B vitamins. You will be amazed at the result. You will sleep better, digest your food better, tire less quickly, feel better in every way. But be sure you ask for 'Phillips' Tonic Yeast.

At all Chemists, 1/6, 3/6 and 5/9

JOHN BULL'S GARDENING GUIDE

NOVEMBER is usually considered the ideal month for planting out Tulips. Order varieties such as Earlies, Cottage and Darwin for continuous flowering from April to June. If you are considering ordering new Rose bushes, you should do so now. They are labour saving and are a delight in any garden for their beauty and scent. Prepare and dig your sites ready to plant as soon as they arrive from the nursery. The established rose-bed should be weeded and all briar growths removed. Manuring and pruning should, of course, be left until the spring. A start should also be made with the herbaceous border. Complete remodelling of the flower garden can take place now. As soon as the plants have lost their flowers and died down, cut the stems almost to ground level. If some of the plants have overgrown, lift, divide and replant suitable pieces. Discard old stock and be adventurous by introducing some new subjects which should be planted in their new quarters so that they become established before the bad weather arrives. On your food plots, lift and store all root crops. Dig and trench vacant ground. Sow broad beans.

THE PLANT EXPERT OFFERS YOU

PLANT NOW **DOUBLE DAFFS.** 25 for 2/-

Tulips, 2/- 25. Large Tulips, 3/6 25. Cyclamen Plants (Xmas-flowering), 10/- doz. Freesia corms, scented, 6/6 100. Gaillardias, Geums, Carnations, Sweet Williams, plants 12 for 2/-. Double Scented Pinks, 4/- doz. Coreopsis, 12 plants for 2/3. Polyanthus, 4/- doz. Brompton Stocks, 50 plants for 2/-. Mount Everest, Wirral Supreme, Wirral Pride, Scabious, and Pyrothrums, Horace Read, Esther Read, all 12 for 12/-. The New Jenifer Read, 4/- each. Madonna Lilies, 1/- each. Arum Lilies, 1/3, corms 2/- each. Indoor Ferns, 1/6 each. Cinerarias, 6/- doz. Perpetual Carnations, 3/- each. Clematis, named, 7/6 each. Rock Plants, 12 diff. vars., 4/6 doz. Lily o' Valley, 3/6 doz. Honeysuckle, 1 yr. 1/6, 2 yr. 2/6 each. Aut. Del. Bush Roses, 2/- each. Climbers, 3/- each. Apples, Pears & Plums, in var., 5/-, 7/6, 10/- each. Victoria, 1-std., 5/- each. Gypsophila Bristol Fairy & Flamingo, 4/- each. Xmas Roses, 4/- each. Pampas Grass, white & pink, 4/- each. Magnolias, 17/6 each. ALL ORDERS UNDER 20/- add 1/- pkg. SEND STAMP FOR LIST.

THE PLANT EXPERT, ST. MARY'S NURSERIES (99), MARKET HARBOROUGH, LEICS.

FOGWILLS Wonder Long-Pod **BROAD BEANS**

10 Beans in a Pod. Wonderful Free Gifts

NOW IS THE TIME TO SOW FOGWILLS WONDER LONG-POD, the LONGEST, most PROLIFIC and FINEST FLAVOURED BROAD BEAN in the World, 3/- per pint carriage paid. Send now; every customer will receive three FREE GIFTS as follow: 1/- packet (2,000 seeds) FOGWILLS FAMOUS GIANT EXHIBITION BRUSSELS SPROUTS, largest, most magnificent solid Sprouts in cultivation, and FREE, a 6d. packet (1,000 seeds) FOGWILLS PRIDE OF THE VALLEY PARSNIP, grown over 50 inches long, and FREE, one packet MIXED SWEET PEAS. SEND ONLY 3/-

Catalogue of "Best-Result" Seeds free on request.

FOGWILLS LTD. Dept. A SEED HOUSE GUILDFORD

Est. 1836. Awarded 69 Medals

The **BATLEY** CONCRETE GARAGE

- Erect it yourself
- Permanent yet portable
- No maintenance costs
- Lasts a lifetime

Send for free brochure

ERNEST BATLEY LTD. 22 Coventry Rd., Holbrooks, Coventry Tel.: 89245/6

FREE DELIVERY within 100 miles of LONDON or COVENTRY

BURNS 16 DAYS. One filling NO FUMES! NO SMELL! ZAMBA 'SQUAT' Paraffin HEATER

1 Burner 13/6 Post Free

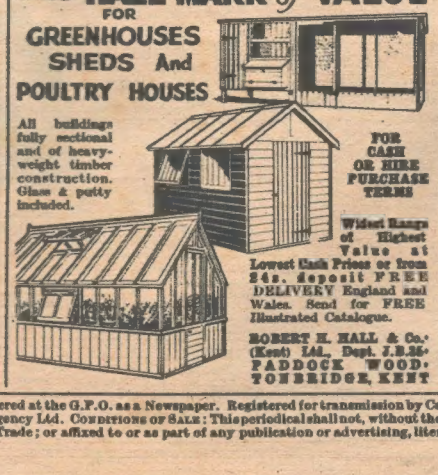
Steel seamless container, leakproof, rustproof, 2 pint capacity. Size 8¼ in. by 3¾ in. Costs only ¼d. per day. Gives gentle heat in greenhouse, shed or home. C.O.D. 1/- ex. (Helps prevent burst pipes in lav., etc.). Cash with order. Satfn. or refund. 2 Burner (8 day) 15/9 Spare wicks 3d. each

BURNS 100 HRS. One filling ZAMBA "DUPLEX" PARAFFIN HEATER. No Fumes; No Smell; No Trouble. Save burst pipes, warm bedroom, etc. Easy to fill and light; snuffer fitted; leak-proof 1-gallon steel tank; clear viewer; strong funnel; double burner, 12 in. high, 9 in. diam. (overall). Cash with order or C.O.D. *Trade Enquiries Invited.*

22/6 POST FREE *CATALOGUE FREE*

STOCKPORT DIST. CO. (M.O.) Ltd., 785 Reynolds Mills, Stockport

The **HALL MARK** *of* **VALUE** FOR GREENHOUSES SHEDS And POULTRY HOUSES



All buildings fully sectional and of heavy-weight timber construction. Glass & putty included.

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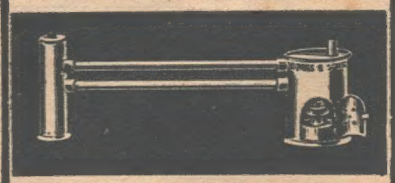

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